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**HERDER'S RELATION TO THE
AESTHETIC THEORY
OF HIS TIME**

**A CONTRIBUTION BASED ON THE FOURTH
CRITICAL WÄLDCHEN**

A DISSERTATION

**SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND LITERATURE
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN

BY

MALCOLM HOWARD DEWEY

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NOTE

In presenting in Part I a brief survey of aesthetic theory in the 18th century in France, England and Germany, the author has made no effort to cover the entire field. Selection has been prompted by the desire to bring into relief the leading ideas of those writers who were thought to be of especial moment at the time Herder composed the *Fourth Wäldchen* (1769), a procedure which was deemed necessary for a better understanding of the particular purpose of the thesis.

The *Fourth Wäldchen* has been examined in Part II with particular reference to previous theory, since it offers what amounts to documentary evidence with regard to the conscious relationship in which Herder stood with his contemporaries and predecessors in this field. Within the work itself however Herder seems to abandon what is largely an eclectic attitude owing to the development of a new and original theory of art which occupied a large place in his future development. It has been possible at this point to indicate an interesting relationship which Diderot bears to this new theory.

The present work is the outcome of special studies prepared for the Herder Seminars conducted by Professor Martin Schütze of the University of Chicago, to whom I am particularly grateful for many valuable suggestions. I wish to acknowledge indebtedness further to Professor William A. Nitze and Professor Edwin Preston Dargan of the University of Chicago whose lectures on French Criticism were excellent expositions of French theory. My thanks are likewise due Professor John M. Steadman of the Department of English and Professor Nolan A. Goodyear of the Department of Romance Languages, both of Emory University, for their criticisms and assistance in reading proofs.

I

THE FRENCH MOVEMENT

Aesthetic theory in the 18th century in France retained a strong adherence to the principles and manner of the French classic period. This was due in part to the commanding position which the literature of the age of Louis XIV held in the minds of the French. But it is quite as well to be accounted for in the long history of Renaissance theory of art and poetry, with its incessant reinterpretation of Aristotle, Horace, Quintilian etc., and in its repeated injunction to imitate the ancients, which found its consummation in the *Art Poétique* of Boileau. The French came to accept a more or less fixed attitude with regard to the formal aspects of poetry and art, with the result that aesthetic theory in the 18th Century in France drew heavily from the past and never seriously brought into question the main tenets of the age of Boileau. Batteux for example accepts completely the traditional point of view. Dubos, whose theory is otherwise so new and interesting, never doubts the existence of good taste as formulated in the classic period and crystalized in poetry and art. Even Diderot never violently broke from the French conception of classic tragedy; his innovations were applied to a completely new genre which he believed he was creating, wherein he retained many formal principles which harmonized none too well with his main purpose and which were clearly an inheritance from which he was unable to detach himself.

In the matter of content, so far as this can be distinguished from form, the new age in France had definite things to offer. The philosophical movement of the time showed the tendency to break away from authority and investigate the facts of experience on their own merits. In poetry and art this meant that the emotional reaction became more and more the thing of interest. The passions aroused in a work of art were compared with the passions aroused in life, and pleasure in art was compared with pleasure in life. In approaching art from this standpoint, in attempting to discover a natural theory of art, in every way comparable to the effort in another field to found a natural theory of morality, the theorists of the 18th century were

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preparing the way for a revolution in art theory. But this in reality did not take place, generally speaking, either in theory or in practice in France during the century. Traditional form was too strong to permit a complete fruition of these ideas, and theory was not successful in fusing the new theories with accepted principles of form. Germany, rather than France, experienced the literary revolution and saw the fruition of the new movement both in theory and in works of real literary art.

BOILEAU

It is difficult to determine the full extent of the influence of Boileau on the age which followed, but we know it was very great. The *Art Poétique* (1674) was constantly quoted and in the main its authority was unquestioned. It had the merit of being a clear statement of the principal standards to which the age conformed. In general it represented an effort to apply the test of reason to accepted principles of art. The age in which Boileau lived had inherited from Descartes and Corneille a distinct form of rationalism; but the rationalism which we find in Racine and Boileau differed to this extent: that it formed itself about a conception of art the impulse towards which was found in Renaissance criticism—namely, the Graeco-Roman ideal.¹ Boileau had little doubt but that reason sanely applied, *sens commun*, would confirm the classic conception of art, and if used by the poet would secure the correct result.

The doctrine of the imitation of nature was accepted by Boileau as one of the cardinal principles of art. Beauty and truth were with him practically identical terms, reason alone determining the question of truth, and reason being in the end the organ which passed upon the question of beauty. *Feeling* as applied to art was little more than reason acting promptly and perhaps unconsciously, and good taste was taken in the sense of an acquired *feeling*, it being taken for granted good taste would accept the standards of classic art. In holding therefore to the doctrine of the imitation of nature, he did not intend that the poet should imitate the objects as he saw them in nature, but rather that he should present what he held to be the true and the essential in nature, with the special observance that it be acceptable at the same time to refined society. This meant in general then the depiction of the typical from which the objects which we observe in nature were to a greater or less extent deviations.²

¹ Lanson, *Hist. de la Litt. fr.* 10th ed., p. 398.

² See *Art Poétique* III. 359 ff.

We can best see Boileau's conception of the truth of nature when we compare his application of reason to that in Descartes and Corneille. According to Descartes the mind seeks clear ideas. The ideal for the soul life is to have ideas as clear and distinct as the idea of our own existence (*cogito ergo sum*) or our idea of God. The effect of the passions and the senses was to create confused ideas, and life consists in the main in a wrestling through from these confused ideas to the clear ideas of reason which is its goal. The best antidote to the passions therefore is a clear idea. Corneille, arriving at his conclusions quite independently of Descartes, has the same conception of reason as applied to conduct. The Corneillian hero consistently reasons his way to a clear conception of duty and there is no thought but that the will to act will be the immediate issue of this clear conception. Corneille's dramatic theories represent an effort to interpret Aristotle in conformity with his own theory and practice, the crux of the entire difference being in this particularly rationalistic conception of character.

Character as conceived in Boileau consisted first of all in a true depiction of the type:

Quiconque voit bien l'homme, et d'un esprit profond,
De tant de coeurs cachés a pénétré le fond;
Qui sait bien ce que c'est qu'un prodigue, un avare,
Un honnête homme, un fat, un jaloux, un bizarre;
Sur une scène heureuse il peut les étaler.

III, 361ff.

To this was added a Greek conception of what he was pleased to call *mesure*, moderation, and which in general meant the elimination of extremes, or in Boileau the avoidance of what was offensive to good taste.

When Aristotle stated that probable truth was more philosophical than historical truth, he opened the floodgates for later theory. It was on this basis that the Aristotelian imitation of nature was interpreted. Not nature as it is, but nature "as it ought to be." To Boileau this meant the imitation of nature, not as it is phenomenally, but of things as they are for all time, the imitation of the eternal truths behind the shifting changes, and it cannot be said that he left much room for the individual as such. This was the truth which the Greeks imitated and hence the eternal value of Greek works. From this standpoint the imitation of the ancients and the imitation of nature can no longer be contradictory terms.

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To consider truth and beauty and goodness as eternal and absolute is of course to ignore the historical viewpoint and to fail to make allowance for the relation which ideas may have to the environment out of which the poet and artist create. In view of the attention which the coming age was to give to the question of *milieu* and historical truth, it is interesting to note how abstract this conception of Greek life and art is. In this respect they went further than the ancients themselves and tended rather to make the ancients after their own image, to modernize antiquity.³

BATTEUX

From the standpoint of German theory the Abbé Batteux is of considerably more importance than a number of critics, such as Fontenelle, La Motte etc., who stood closer to Boileau in time if perhaps less so from the standpoint of ideas and who have accordingly been omitted from this study. The "*Traité des Beaux Arts en Général ou Tous les Arts réduits à un seul Principe*" (1746)⁴ was twice translated into German within a comparatively short time after its appearance, by Ramler and by J. A. Schlegel. And for twenty years Batteux became the authority for an important faction in Germany and his followers were only routed finally by the appearance of Herder's critique in 1772.⁵

As the title of his work indicates, Batteux attempted to find in the theory of imitation the principle which was at the basis of all arts and which would bring them into a single system. He differs from Boileau in that he proceeds from taste rather than reason, but it is an open question whether this point of departure is after all fundamentally different. It depends largely upon Batteux' understanding of taste. He seems in general to have considered taste in the nature of an immediate⁶ judgment, where in reality reason and understanding have their place. "Although this feeling (i.e., taste) seems to arise suddenly and blindly, it is nevertheless always preceded at least by a flash of light, by reason of which we discover the qualities

³ See Lanson 497.

⁴ The edition used is *Principes de la Littérature*, Lyons 1802, of which Vol. I is the *Traité*. See also a valuable article by Schencker: "Batteux und die Nachahmungstheorie in Deutschland."

⁵ Hettner, *Gesch. der Lit. des 18t. Jhs.*

⁶ Batteux, pp. 56-57.

of the object. . . . This operation is so rapid that one is often not conscious of it and when reason takes cognizance of this feeling afterwards, it has difficulty in recognizing the cause."

Batteux attempts to distinguish the true from the beautiful. The true, he holds, is applied to that which is considered without regard to its relation to ourselves, and beauty is something which has direct bearing upon ourselves, which attracts us to it. Beauty as such must have the quality of perfection, and while the intellect has exclusively to do with truth, it is repeatedly stated that it is the intellect which recognizes beauty so far as it refers to perfection. A work of art is, however, not exhausted in being perfect, that is, in having beauty; it must have goodness as well, which in Batteux is taken to mean that it must bear a positive relation to our moral being. Taste then, in distinction from the intellect (*esprit*), is appealed to in a work of art, taste having to do ultimately with moral values whether with respect to art or to life.

The aim of the artist in a work of art is not to give pleasure but to imitate nature, pleasure necessarily resulting from the imitation.⁷ In the imitation of nature in a work of art genius and taste become practically synonymous terms, except in so far as genius may designate in particular an ability to put into a work of art the beauty and goodness which nature reveals. "They are creators only in having observed, and conversely they are observers only to be in a condition to create."⁸

In so far as beauty is concerned Batteux is on classic ground, beauty being conceived in the main as a perfect expression of art. It is the thing itself presented in all its completeness and purity. Nature does not offer perfect objects of imitation. The artist must therefore seek for the perfect in nature by studying the various objects of the kind and selecting the most perfect details wherever they are to be found. The famous example of Zeuxis is cited, whose ideal of a beautiful woman was secured by taking features from many individual women.⁹ Molière's *Misanthrope* was not a copy of one man, but resulted from seeing many examples of the "humeur noire" to which the author added from his genius.¹⁰ This *belle nature* or

⁷ P. 130.

⁸ P. 14.

⁹ P. 26.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

nature choisie is a sort of higher nature, nature in its perfection, and is the single object of the artist's task. Beauty in Batteux can only mean the formal expression of this ideal nature whereby the mind is enabled to grasp it easily.

It is largely on ethical grounds that Batteux makes a serious effort to account for the pleasure in art. Nature in Batteux, as it was in Boileau, is essentially man. To imitate nature is to imitate life. Against the imperfections of life there is the ideal life, or the life that ought to be, and herein the Aristotelian distinction of tragedy from history is brought into play. There being a natural impulse in the soul towards its own good,¹¹ art may appeal to this primal source of pleasure by presenting to it nature as it appears when it is free to act in all its perfection. Hence while beauty may of itself "extend and perfect our ideas,"¹² a purely Cartesian viewpoint, a work of art by appealing to the heart tends "to the conservation and perfection of our being."¹³ Art thus presents the "example which instructs and which regulates the human race, *vivimus ad exempla*."¹⁴ "The example of nature which the Muses propose as model, teaches them to do nothing without a wise design tending to the perfection of those for whom they work. Just as they imitate nature in its principles, in its tastes, in its movement, so they imitate nature in the views and end which it proposes."¹⁵

The imitation of "beautiful nature" does not mean that the artist may not present what is of itself unpleasant. The artist may put serpents and monsters on his canvas, and the poet depict the *Misanthrope*. The pleasure comes first by reason of the fact that the illusion is never so perfect but that we recognize the imitation, the "phantom." Should we be moved for the moment to accept the imitation as real, the pleasure in suddenly realizing it is not so is itself a pleasure.¹⁶ The explanation however which fits more accurately into his general theory is contained in the statement that "the end of poetry is to please, and to please in moving the passions. But to give us a perfect

¹¹ P. 57.

¹² P. 80.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ P. 20.

¹⁵ P. 140. On p. 111 Batteux states that "if everyone practiced Christianity the way he believes it, it would accomplish immediately *what it will take art centuries to bring about and then only imperfectly*."

¹⁶ P. 87 ff.

and sound (*solide*) pleasure, it must only move those passions which it is important for us to have and avoid those which are hostile to wisdom." The examples cited are horror of crime, pity for unfortunates, admiration of great examples etc. These are the passions for poetry "which is not made to foment corruption in the heart, but to be the delight of virtuous souls."¹⁷

Effective imitation of nature requires that the artist put himself into the character and situation being depicted. This was what Batteux considers to be *enthusiasm*, as opposed to traditional conceptions of poetic madness, divine inspiration etc., for which he seems to have little patience. While exactness or accuracy is made a requirement with respect to the imitation of nature, the artist was not thereby denied the privilege of licence (*liberté*); in fact the depiction of the truth or beauty of nature made this an essential, whereby the artist in the state of enthusiasm was at liberty to give a perfect representation of that which he had in mind. The test of the effectiveness of the result in tragedy was that one should be able to seat himself in the *parterre* and imagine that all he sees is true.¹⁸ This might have led to the "naturalism" of Diderot, who, we remember, made a similar test for tragedy,¹⁹ had he not held firmly to the classic notion of probability and considered that *la belle nature* was necessarily represented in art by the grand style.²⁰ He makes a similar test with regard to painting, namely that all the rules yield to one main purpose, to produce a "deception of the eyes by means of a resemblance, to make us believe that the object is real, although it is only an image."²¹

The theories of Batteux in no way contemplate changes in the form or content of French classic tragedy or art. In place of what seemed to him to be a disorganized mass of theory coming down from the past²² he proposes a single principle of art around which all former observations and rules may organize themselves, and which at the same time is a principle consonant with life, i.e., imitation of nature.

¹⁷ P. 135. The entire passage might well be compared with similar views expressed in Diderot's theory of drama, with which there is a striking resemblance.

¹⁸ P. 239.

¹⁹ See *Bijoux Indiscrets*

²⁰ Batteux, pp. 243-4.

²¹ P. 270.

²² See Introduction to *Traité*.

It is important to note that Batteux did not include architecture among the arts strictly speaking, and considered that in this instance utility rather than imitation was the main interest.²³ Nor does he make use of architecture to indicate his conception of symmetry and order, so frequent among theorists. It is rather painting which gives him these ideas. "Good taste is an habitual love of order. The symmetry of the parts among themselves and with the whole is as necessary in the conduct of a moral action as in a picture."²⁴

Imitation of nature applied to lyric poetry had its difficulties. Batteux considered that a lyric differed from other poems in so far that it was not the imitation of an action but of a passion.²⁵ It sings the movements of the heart. He was led to a curious explanation of Biblical poetry, to which he hesitated to apply his main principle, stating that it was not imitation at all, but God speaking through man.²⁶

For logical reasons the French movement is interrupted at this point to consider the English school.²⁷

²³ P. 45.

²⁴ P. 113.

²⁵ P. 263.

²⁶ P. 259.

²⁷ Stein: *die Entstehung der neuern Aesthetik*, sets the example in this.

THE ENGLISH MOVEMENT

The English movement in aesthetic theory took a different standpoint from that of the French. While classicism remained an important factor it was offset by positive tendencies which were fatal to it, and which made it possible to relish not only the dramas of Shakespeare in spite of their "formlessness" but also the Miltonian epic built up on a theme which had become anathema in French classic theory. The change which was experienced in England following the Revolution of 1688 developed a widespread feeling of political liberty, a fact which strongly impressed Voltaire on the occasion of his English visit. The rise of the middle class was the important moment, and the pronounced moral character which was evidenced in literature indicates a tendency in the direction of a more vital attitude towards all forms of literature and art. In the field of serious thought the new spirit saw in the scientific work of Newton a definite example of the experimental method which had been indicated earlier by Bacon, while Locke set the standard for the manner in which we should approach the subject of the origin of knowledge. And there was still another tendency in philosophy which confined itself rather exclusively to the question of morality and attempted to develop a theory of a natural religion, wherein it was shown that our ideas of right and wrong were a consequence of our natural relation to society.

SHAFTESBURY¹

Shaftesbury's contribution to the general field of aesthetic theory was one of large importance. In the main, avoiding metaphysical discussion, for which he had little use, and adhering consistently to his general purpose of establishing a moral philosophy, he is of particular importance not only in showing the relation which aesthetics bears to conduct but in interpreting this from the standpoint of a Greek classic ideal. In England this tendency carried, broadly speaking, straight through to the theory of Home and was particularly

¹ Shaftesbury, 3 volume, ed. 1749; works date from 1699 to 1714.

characteristic of English theory. In France, where he was known as early as 1707 through the *Journal des Savants*, his influence was to be seen especially in Diderot, who however interests himself in certain features of his theory without accepting it in its completeness, leading perhaps to a logical, if onesided development of his position. In Germany the case was quite different. Shaftesbury's general view favored the classical tendency which became particularly influential through Winckelmann, while the general type of optimism inherent in the system harmonized well with the standpoint of Leibnitz. Lessing, Sulzer, Mendelssohn, Herder, Goethe and Schiller are attracted by broad aspects of this theory, and in the *Aesthetische Erziehung des Menschen* of Schiller we find one of the most complete exemplifications of this general position, where in fact Schiller may be looked upon as making an attempt to harmonize the standpoints of Kant and Shaftesbury.

We can best grasp the character of Shaftesbury's aesthetic viewpoint if we consider the notion of totality which was fundamental to his system. According to this view, from the smallest unities of life to the largest there is to be found a series of systems or totalities of ever increasing comprehensiveness, the final totality being the universe itself. Shaftesbury was early in life a follower of Spinoza, but there is this to be noted with regard to Shaftesbury's conception of the universe, that he considers the world not as something which is composed of physical forces or which may be summed up in geometrical terms, but rather as a living force behind which is the suggestion of a living organism. The different species of animals, for example, of which man is one, represent such a natural system or totality. Each species is complete in itself and yet subordinate to a larger and more comprehensive order or system.

From this general standpoint we are in a position to understand two different phases of Shaftesbury's theory. In so far as individuals are organs or parts of a whole they may be judged only with respect to the whole. In so far they are relative and they must be judged in relations. Shaftesbury's optimism is based just on this principle, that whatever is in the world is right, if not apparently in itself alone, at least with respect to the larger whole. "If everything which exists be according to a good order and for the best; then of necessity there is no such thing as real *ill* in the universe, nothing *ill* with respect to

the whole."² Many things therefore seem imperfect which to an infinite mind would be perfect.³

He held that there was a natural state for each individual in the species to which he belonged, however much he might deviate from it. In other words: "We know that every creature has a private *good* and *interest* of his own, which nature has compelled him to seek by all the advantages afforded him within the compass of his make. We know that there is in reality a right and a wrong state of every creature, and that his right one is by nature forwarded and by himself affectionately sought. There being therefore in every creature a certain interest or good, there must also be a certain end, to which everything in his constitution must *naturally* refer."⁴ He finds it to be an energy of nature that every particular nature strives towards its own perfection; unless something foreign disturbs or hinders, it constantly produces what is good for itself. This is illustrated in the effort man makes to throw off sickness, and in the plants which thrive and attain their perfection where nothing from without or foreign may prevent such an end in whole or in part. What is true of particular nature is true finally of the "Nature of the Whole."⁵

In working out the theory that the individual bears an inherent relation to the whole, Shaftesbury introduces a principle which is purely classic in its conception. He considers that we have "nothing more strongly imprinted in our minds or more closely woven with our souls than the idea or sense of *order* and *proportion*." Unity of design is the principle which makes parts constituents of one whole. "Such is a tree with all its branches, an animal with all its members, an edifice with all its exterior and interior ornaments. What else is even a tune or symphony or any excellent piece of music, than a certain system or proportion of sounds?"⁶

In stressing the idea of proportion and harmony, it is not always clear in Shaftesbury whether he had in mind the more formal conception as expressed in the perfect balance of classic architecture or an organic conception that finds an analogy in the human body or the tree. To have brought forward the latter conception at all was of

² II, p. 7.

³ II, 235 f.

⁴ II, p. 11.

⁵ II, 233 f.

⁶ II, p. 185.

real significance and it occupies a considerable place in his theory. He had no doubt but that taste for proportion was inherent in human nature and needed only the proper training to evidence itself. The sense of proportion in morality was in every way analogous to the sense of proportion in art and therein lay the practical value of art. Art tended to develop this natural sense of harmony and balance, enabling the mind more easily to grasp the idea of totality wherein the individual fact has value only in its relation to the whole. Imitation of nature which is seen in art is nothing more than the establishing of a little world wherein the individual fact is shown in its true relation; but this world, far from being a mere world of fancy, is one built upon a true knowledge of the actual world, so that in art truth and beauty are one. Hence art served the purpose of developing a natural taste for proportion which was applicable not only to matters of beauty, but to morality and truth as well. The man whose nature had been cultivated to that point that his natural sense of harmony and proportion revealed its full authority, he called a "virtuoso."

The sense of balance or proportion may be considered from two angles. From the standpoint of society it represents a happy adjustment of the selfish and the benevolent acts by virtue of which man occupies his true place, Shaftesbury having little use for the theory of Hobbes, who explained all acts as being prompted by a kind of self-interest.⁷ Shaftesbury's position is summed up in this manner: "For a creature whose natural end is society to operate as is by nature appointed him towards the good of such his society, or whole, is in reality to pursue his own natural and proper good."⁸ By applying his theory of harmony to this principle he developed the idea that human nature could be so trained by this means that there results an instinct to act correctly without reflection. The philosopher and the well-bred man agree "in aiming at what is excellent, aspiring to a just taste, and in carrying in view a model of what is beautiful and becoming. . . . The taste of beauty, and the relish of what is decent, just and amiable, perfects the character of the gentleman and the philosopher."⁹

⁷ I, 60.

⁸ III, 152.

⁹ III, 111 f.

From another viewpoint Shaftesbury considers the passions. Far from wishing to subordinate the passions to reason, he sees the passions as a positive factor in life. The aim then is not to conquer and subdue the passions, but rather to bring them into a harmony with what is for the individual's own good. "Men who have the liveliest sense, and are the easiest affected with pain or pleasure, have need of the strongest influence or force of *other affections* in order to preserve a right *balance* within."¹⁰ Strong passion is to be condemned only in so far as it is seen to destroy what Shaftesbury calls the economy of the passions and bring about a disturbance through a disproportion. This he calls a "moral kind of architecture."¹¹

This theory is valuable not only because it allows for the passions in life as well as through art, but because it is a theory which recognizes individual characteristics as distinct from ideal types. "A man is by nothing so much himself as by his temper, and the character of his passions and affections. If he loses what is manly and worthy in these, he is as much lost to himself as when he loses his memory and understanding."¹² Morality consists for Shaftesbury "not in the control of general maxims, not in the subordination of the individual's will to norms and standards, but in the *full living out of an entire individuality*."¹³

Attention needs to be called to another viewpoint with regard to the passions, because of similar theories advanced by other writers. It is the notion that "without action, motion and employment the body languishes and becomes subject to disease," and similarly with respect to the mind and soul he states that "the thoughts and passions being unnaturally withheld from their due objects turn against itself and create the highest impatience and ill humor."¹⁴ Hence the need of social and natural affection.¹⁵ This theory to be sure is not original with Shaftesbury, except perhaps with regard to the increased emphasis on the passions.

It has been seen from the foregoing that Shaftesbury not merely accepts the Greek ideal of proportion, balance etc., but attempts to

¹⁰ II, 63.

¹¹ II, 88.

¹² I, 82.

¹³ Windelband (Tufts) *Hist. of Phil.* 508.

¹⁴ Shaftesbury, II, 85 f., cf. 105.

¹⁵ II, 88.

make it a vital factor in his moral philosophy. It is natural therefore that he should accept the general principle with regard to beauty that "there is a power in numbers, harmony, proportion and beauty of every kind, which naturally captivates the heart and raises the imagination to an opinion or conceit of something majestic and divine."¹⁶ It is impossible to determine in Shaftesbury's discussion of beauty whether he has in mind merely beauty of form, or beauty in a relationship or *rapport*. In the following instance it is clearly a matter of form. "A painter" he states¹⁷ "if he has any genius, understands the truth and unity of design, and knows he is even then unnatural, when he follows nature too close and strictly copies life. For his art allows him not to bring all nature into his piece, but a part only. However his piece, if it be beautiful, and carries truth, must be a *whole*, by itself, complete, independent, and withal great and comprehensive as he can make it. So that particulars on this occasion must yield to the general design and all things be subservient to that which is principal: in order to form a certain *easiness of sight*, a simple clear and united view which would be broken and disturbed by the expression of anything peculiar or distinct." The particular moral application he makes of formal beauty is seen in the same connection. "And thus after all the most natural beauty in all the world is honesty and moral truth. For all beauty is truth. True features make the beauty of the face, and true proportions make the beauty of architecture, as true measures that of harmony and music. In poetry, which is all fable, truth still is perfection. And whoever is scholar enough to read the ancient philosopher (Aristotle) or his modern copists, upon the nature of dramatic and epic poems will easily understand this account of truth."¹⁸

Relative beauty is not opposed to beauty of form but inherently related to it. "The proportionate and regular state is truly prosperous and natural in every subject. The same features which make deformity, create incommodiousness and disease. And the same shapes and proportions which make beauty, afford advantage, by adapting to activity and use. Even in the imitative and designing arts the *truth* or *beauty* of every figure or statue is measured from the

¹⁶ III, 24.

¹⁷ I, 96.

¹⁸ In a footnote Shaftesbury acknowledges indebtedness to Bossu with regard to Aristotle.

perfection of nature, in her just adapting of every limb and proportion to the activity, strength, dexterity, life and vigor of the particular species or animal designed. Thus beauty and truth are plainly joined with the notion of utility and convenience."¹⁹ This represents part of the rational effort in Shaftesbury to bring beauty, truth and goodness on common ground. It is interesting to note that he puts the so-called beauty in mathematics on a lower basis than other types of beauty, on the grounds that the harmony, proportion, etc., found in mathematics, while pleasurable, have no direct relation to our own good. His general dictum however is this: "What is harmonious and proportionable is true; what is at once both beautiful and true is of consequence agreeable and good."²⁰

In the "*Judgment of Hercules*" Shaftesbury furnished an interesting example for the coming generation of an effort to show the special treatment which would be required in the adaptation of a subject of history to sculpture. Here he not only grasped the fact that sculpture was confined to the depiction of a single moment but showed the reason which favored the acceptance of the most fruitful moment. Considerations of both content and form enter into the discussion. Lessing's indebtedness to Shaftesbury at this point is generally known.

Diderot accuses Shaftesbury of sacrificing beauty to the sense of utility and sums up Shaftesbury's entire philosophy of art as being what is most perfectly ordered to produce the most perfect effect; he considered Shaftesbury's idea to be that the most beautiful man was one whose organs were best proportioned to perform the animal functions, and that the most beautiful chair would be one whose parts were shaped in a fashion most fitted for its purpose. In other words, he singles out relative beauty in Shaftesbury only to neglect the other beauty of harmony and perfection. This criticism shows a characteristic quality in Diderot himself, that he was unable to grasp the Greek sense of proportion which thus prevented Shaftesbury's theory from taking the onesided development which Diderot here suggests and which, as will be seen later, became Diderot's particular point of view. Hutcheson on the other hand was impressed by the formal sides of Shaftesbury's view, and instead of grasping his sense of organic totality, confined himself to a consideration of those

¹⁹ III, 124.

²⁰ III, 126.

more static conceptions of unity and order and balance which were illustrated for him in geometric figures.

Hutcheson accepted Shaftesbury's innate sense of proportion at its full value and proceeds with the conviction that it is a sixth sense. Just as sight gives us colors, though our idea of color may be very different from color itself, so the sixth sense presents us with special ideas which as ideas are quite independent of the object. We secure a sense of pleasure in observing order, symmetry etc., quite independently of any distinct knowledge of the exact proportions in the object itself. This sense of proportion he attempted to show was as universal as the sense of heat on approaching a fire. His investigation is based upon an examination of the effect made by simple geometrical figures, and the results obtained here he applies to objects of nature, wherein he is led to that confusion of intellectual and sensuous beauty against which Shaftesbury had spoken. He considers for example that the beauty of the heavens consists in a comprehension of the movements in the planetary system, apparently quite without regard for the impression made immediately upon the eye.

HOGARTH

While not entering into an extensive treatment of aesthetic problems, Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753) represents a definite and important contribution to the aesthetic theory of the time, the influence of which is traceable in all the subsequent writers with whom we are here dealing. The theory of the serpentine line which he here examines, was not original with him, as he explains at length in the preface. He gives a reference to indicate that it was consciously used by Michael Angelo and he has no doubt that the principle itself was the secret of Greek art. He finds mention of it in contemporary French theory, but nowhere does he find any effort to account for this principle, it being considered a *je ne sais quoi* of beauty. Hogarth's task then is to show that the principle is grounded in nature and may be scientifically explained.

He attempts to show that the eye naturally enjoys "winding roads and serpentine rivers and all objects composed of wavy and serpentine lines."²¹ Where "intricacy" is presented in this fashion, he finds that *it leads the eye a wanton kind of chase*, and the pleasure which arises

²¹ Chapt. V.

from such objects entitles them to the name of beautiful. Of all the principles of art such as fitness, regularity, symmetry etc., the one principle which seems to be the most important, because the most inclusive, is variety. The mind enjoys a reasonable degree of variety and the effect of the serpentine line, which rests midway between the straight line and the circular, is to lead the mind easily and gracefully into such a degree of variety. Many experiments with lines and objects convince him of a natural choice in favor of the easy, graceful curve as against the straight line or more violent curves. So his deduction is that all great art will necessarily reveal in the lines of the figures, in grouping etc., the adherence to this fundamental principle of beauty. Hogarth also took up the effect of magnitude in securing a "pleasing sense of horror."

Differing far from many of his contemporaries, he could see consistent beauty in Gothic architecture, where he finds that improvements were made following the "natural persuasions of the eye," the eye being naturally attracted through graceful lines to an appreciation of a greater amount of variety than would be possible in other forms. The principle which is thus illustrated, is one which he finds in nature and one which too great attention to the theory of imitation might lose sight of.

HOME

The most logical successor of Shaftesbury, Addison and Hutcheson was unquestionably Home (Lord Kames) whose *Elements of Criticism* (1762) represents the most complete treatment of aesthetics up to that time in England. Chronologically he follows Burke, but the strict adherence to the principles of classical formalism as well as the relation which he thought that art bears to moral culture makes this work the culmination of what has been seen to be a definite attitude towards aesthetic problems.

It will be found that in many ways Home represents a distinct advance in this field. His method was intended to be strictly scientific. It was based upon a thorough investigation of aesthetic pleasure in reality from the standpoint of psychology. It was a theory which took into account the nature of the objects as well as the *emotional* effect. And far more than any previous critic he took thorough advantage of the Shakespearian drama, which in part accounts for elements of originality in his view point. It was here that he felt emboldened to break away from the sway of authority

and the efficacy of rules and to substitute considerations of psychology, of human nature. But with it all there remains a strongly rationalistic bent in Home's thought which associated itself with a decidedly classic turn of mind.

Home makes it clear that his purpose was not primarily aesthetics or criticism but through this study the attainment of a greater knowledge of the human mind, and in so doing he distinctly occupies a position similar to both Sulzer and Herder in Germany. "But though criticism is thus his only declared aim," Home states with reference to himself, "he will not disown that all along it has been his view to explain the nature of Man, considered as a sensitive being capable of pleasure and pain." He will however observe from first to last a scientific method, which consists in "ascending gradually to principles from facts and experiments, instead of beginning with the former handled abstractly and ascending to the latter."

Home considered it important to note that aesthetics was essentially concerned with the sense of sight and hearing. These he distinguishes from the lower senses by the fact that there is no consciousness of an impression made immediately upon the organ of sense, as is the case in the lower three senses, the object on the contrary seeming to be without. Hence he concluded that while all sensation is essentially in the mind, still we are led in the case of sight and hearing to place it directly in those organs, and for this reason sight and hearing were the "more refined and spiritual." So he established a gradation of pleasures from the purely organic through sight and hearing to the pleasures of the intellect which he considered supreme. This arrangement he thought to be in strict accord with the divine plan—a law of nature whereby the mind gradually ascends to the full measure of its dignity. One may readily see how on such a basis the pleasures of the ear and eye served an educative purpose in preparing the mind to attain its highest end.

He was however careful to note that there was a distinction which set the aesthetic pleasures quite apart from the purely sensual on the one hand and the intellectual on the other, namely that the aesthetic pleasures permitted of a greater duration. Organic pleasures decreased in intensity when continued and intellectual pleasures led to fatigue. Aesthetic pleasure on the other hand tended to rest the mind, furnishing an activity for it which tended to restore it to its original tone, and he is able to agree with Dubos that silence is

unable to calm an agitated mind, and that art for that reason fulfilled a real function.

The important truths that had been laid open by science, such as "a general theorem and the general laws that govern the material and moral worlds," convinced Home of the greater dignity of the pleasures of the understanding. Hence he is able to consider the "fine arts studied as a rational science superior far to what they afford as a subject of taste merely."²² In other words criticism or aesthetics affords a higher order of pleasure than that which arises from the enjoyment of the works of art themselves. This position is explained not alone by the attitude he had towards the rational side of our nature, but by the conception that the art of criticism afforded a means for correcting our taste and directing it towards that perfection which was an absolute standard.

The same principle holds with regard to morality. Accepting the principle of a natural taste in morals, he finds that the individual is hastened to perfection in virtue, by a consideration of moral principles or laws. Morality and aesthetics were however not merely analogous in this respect, but the one even as a rational science aids the other. Taste in the fine arts, depending on culture, goes "hand in hand with the moral sense to which it is nearly allied; both of them discover what is right and wrong; fashion, temper and education have an influence to preserve them pure and untainted; neither of them is arbitrary and local, being rooted in human nature and governed by principles common to all men." "No occupation attracts a man more to his duty than that of cultivating a taste in fine arts, a just relish of what is beautiful, proper, elegant and ornamental."²³

His conception of a standard of taste is distinctly that of Shaftesbury. A standard of taste arises from the fact that we have the sense or the conviction of a common nature, not only in our own species, but in every species of animals; and there is the conviction that this common nature or standard is *right* or *perfect* and that individuals ought to be conformable to it.²⁴ There is a proper proportion and a proper office for every passion and every bodily member and any deviation is wrong and disagreeable. This is the origin of the conception of a right or wrong sense in morals. Criticism of art like criticism

²² Elements of Criticism Ed. 1883. Chapt. XI. P. 175.

²³ Introd. Pp. 13-15.

²⁴ Chapter II. Part 2 and Chapter XXV.

of morals has its high purpose then in making clear what is conformable to that common nature. Without the existence of such uniformity in morals and art we lose the very foundation respectively for happiness in society and beauty in art, each of which tends towards its particular standard of excellence.

Home enters very exhaustively into the consideration of the passions and emotions, these being the feelings which are raised in us by external objects and in particular by works of art. We are of such a nature that upon the perception of certain external objects we are instantaneously conscious of pleasure or pain. This applies with equal force to internal qualities in others, such as power, courage etc. Actions may awaken this immediate sense, though usually the pleasure or pain is here determined by the intention behind the action, and hence our feeling in this instance awaits the act of reflection. Similarly we enjoy the feeling of joy in others and partake of their feeling of distress. And there is this final consideration that the mere recollection of these things is capable of such emotion.

The part that "fiction" may play in generating passions in us, which he looked upon "as an admirable contrivance of human nature," is made clear by a very interesting theory which he thought "hath scarce ever been touched by any other writer," namely the theory of the "ideal presence." By "ideal presence" he meant an idea or image which could be raised in the mind by speech, writing or painting, similar in kind to the image which memory may furnish of some situation or event. One is made to believe that he is an eye witness, that everything is passing in his presence. "Upon the whole it is by means of ideal presence that our passions are excited and till words can produce that charm, they avail nothing; even real events entitled to our belief must be conceived present and passing in our sight before they can move us."²⁵

Home, like Burke, distinguishes emotion from passion, but the basis of distinction is different. Burke had made pain an element of passion, while Home finds in desire the essential constituent. "An internal motion or agitation of the mind, when it passes away without desire, is denominated an *emotion*; when desire follows, the motion or agitation is denominated a *passion*."²⁶ "The cause of passion is

²⁵ Chapt. II. Part 1, p. 55.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30; cf. p. 11.

that being or thing which by raising desire converts an emotion into a passion."²⁷ His explanation of emotion and passions takes full account of the general position of the moral philosophers with respect to the natural relationship in which man stands with respect to society, and saw in this relationship an explanation for our pleasures. In other words he recognizes a natural order in society and dismisses quite as vehemently as did Shaftesbury and Burke the view that man's motive for action lies in self-love, but considered rather that "his constitution partly selfish, partly social, fits him much better for his present situation."

As far as *emotion* is concerned Home finds a direct relationship between the agreeableness of the object and pleasantness of the emotion. But he admits that when sensible beings become the objects of *passion*, the theory becomes more complex. Here one must account for the element of pain or the disagreeable in the object. Instead of seeing the positive contribution which this pain makes, as did Burke, he develops a theory that pleasure results even where the passion is immediately painful, through the gratification of the desire which, by his definition of passion, was considered an immediate consequence. "A person in distress being so far a disagreeable object, must raise in the spectator a painful passion, and were man a purely selfish being he would desire to be relieved of that pain, by turning from the object. But the principle of benevolence gives an opposite direction to his desire; it makes him desire to afford relief, and by relieving the person from distress his passion is gratified. The painful passion thus directed is termed *sympathy*, which being painful is yet in its nature attractive."²⁸

Objects of sight Home classified under those which awakened a sense of beauty and those which awakened a sense of grandeur or sublimity. He distinguished two kinds of beauty, intrinsic and relative beauty. "Intrinsic beauty is an object of sense merely . . . the perception of relative beauty is accompanied with an act of the understanding or reflection. . . . In a word, intrinsic beauty is ultimate, relative beauty is that of means relating to some good end or purpose." He admits to intrinsic beauty the classic qualities of regularity, uniformity, familiarity, proportion, order and simplicity, believing that such qualities contributed a certain "readiness of

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²⁸ Chapt. II. Part 7. P. 98. Cf. Burke below, page 30.

apprehension." He followed Hutcheson among others in attempting to show by an analysis of simple geometric figures that we have a natural taste for certain types of figures as distinguished from others. He was convinced however that beauty was not a primary quality of the object, but has meaning only in the relation of the object to the percipient. This is particularly true in relative beauty, where he clearly saw the part played by reflection. "An old Gothic tower which has no beauty in itself, appears beautiful, considered as proper to defend against an enemy." Home devotes comparatively little space to relative beauty. Since it required an act of reflection it was opposed in a degree to his fundamental position that beauty as such was immediately perceived and gave immediate pleasure.

Grandeur he considered distinct from beauty by the greatness or magnitude of the subject; agreeableness is the genus of which beauty and grandeur are species. Beauty is characterized by a certain sweetness and gaiety; in grandeur "a large object occupies the whole of the attention, and swells the heart into a vivid emotion, which though extremely pleasant is rather serious than gay." While he admits that in a large work of architecture or in an epic poem irregularities may not be so noticeable, he even here upholds a classic notion found in Longinus, that "in works of art we have regard to exact proportion, in those of nature to grandeur and magnificence."²⁹

A theory fundamental to Home's point of view and one in the application of which he claims originality, is considered under the head of "Perception and Ideas in a train." "A man while awake is conscious of a continued train of perceptions and ideas passing in his mind. Relations by which things are linked together have a great influence in directing the train of thought. Cause and effect, contiguity in place and time, high and low, resemblance, contrast and a thousand other things connect things together without end." This "sort of law of succession," the origin of which he admits to be in Locke, is used by him to explain our pleasure in what we may call classic beauty. "We are framed by nature to relish order and connection. When an object is introduced by a proper connection, we are conscious of a certain pleasure arising from that circumstance." This leads to the following application: "Every work of art that is conformable to the natural course of our idea is so far agreeable; and every work of art that reverses that course is so far disagreeable.

²⁹ Chapt. IV. Pp. 110-112.

Hence it is required in every such work that its parts be orderly arranged and mutually connected, bearing each of them a relation to the whole."

Home takes up the question of uniformity and variety, which were contained in the traditional definition of beauty, and applies the principle he has here stated. "A man, when his perceptions flow in their natural course, feels himself light, airy and easy, especially after any forcible acceleration or relaxation. . . . Nature not only provides against a succession too slow or too quick, but makes the middle course extremely pleasant." Hence the value of this theory of perceptions in a train, which he held had been too little understood; according to this theory variety as a mere ingredient of beauty is shown to make a train of perceptions pleasant.³⁰ With regard to unity in variety as a definition of beauty, he has this characteristic statement. "This definition is far from being just with respect to beauty in general; variety contributes no share to the beauty of a moral action nor of a mathematical theorem, and numberless are the beautiful objects of sight that have little or no variety in them; a globe, the most uniform of all figures is of all the most beautiful."

BURKE

Burke's *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful* (1756) marked a very definite contribution to the subject of aesthetics. Carrying out a plan already suggested perhaps in Addison, as Morley suggests, he attempts to advance a theory of art which has its starting point not in an analysis of works of art but in a consideration of that part of man's nature which is particularly involved in art. Profiting by what had already been offered in this field by Shaftesbury and Dubos among others, Burke takes up the discussion of passions and emotions as being the chief concern of art and attempts an explanation of them which would hold good as much in respect to nature and to life as it did to art. Part I of the *Essay* is devoted exclusively to this end.

Burke's fundamental contention with regard to the emotions is that both pleasure and pain are positive in character. In this he takes deliberate exception to Locke, who held that "the removal or lessening of pain is considered and operates as a pleasure, and the loss or diminishing of pleasure as a pain."³¹ In a large class of emotions

³⁰ Chapt. IX. P. 161ff.

³¹ Burke's footnote to I, sect. 2.

which we consider to be pleasurable he finds that pain is a necessary constituent. He chose to denote the emotions which arise from this mixed sense of the pleasant and unpleasant as passions, such passions producing the sense of the *sublime*. Where such an element of pain is lacking, where we are attracted to the object by reason of certain agreeable qualities in the object, the effect in the mind he considered technically as emotion, rather than passion, resulting from the sense of *beauty*.

Burke's theory of the passions as involving an element of what is painful or something analogous to it, is extremely important with respect to the influence which it had upon German aesthetic theory, where for example it was reinterpreted in terms of Wolffian philosophy by Mendelssohn and entered vitally into Lessing's theory of the drama. Burke is himself not a violent innovator at this point, his theory bearing an intimate relationship with that of Dubos with whose work he was very familiar, Dubos not only making emotion and passion the immediate concern of art, but attempting to explain similarly the pleasure arising in emotions even where these are in themselves unpleasant. In many ways he is seen to be closer to Dubos than to his English predecessors.

The explanation for the pleasure in the passions where pain is involved rests on the general position made familiar by the moral philosophy of the time. On this basis the passions which turn on danger or pain are considered to be the consequence of the natural instinct of *self-preservation*, whereas "under this denomination of *society* the passions are of a complicated kind and branch out into a variety of forms agreeably to that variety of ends they are to serve in the great chain of society. The three principal links in the chain are sympathy, imitations and ambition."²² From this standpoint pleasure in the Aristotelian pity and fear may be explained. Sympathy or pity is a sort of "substitution by which we are put into the place of another man affected in many respects as he is affected. . . . It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting and other affecting arts transfuse their passions from one breast to another and are capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself."²³ In this are involved both a sense for society and a sense of self-preservation.

²² I, sect. 12.

²³ I, sect. 13.

Burke is aware of the common observation that objects which in reality would shock us, are in tragical and such like representations the source of a very high species of pleasure. But he objects to the explanation that such pleasure is to be accounted for on the grounds that the beholder realizes the story is only a fiction or that he is himself free from the evils represented, both of which theories, he holds, imply a more extensive influence of reason in producing our passions than he is willing to admit. As is the case with Dubos, Burke seeks for the explanation outside of art in the normal experiences of men. He is "convinced that we have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the *real* misfortunes and pain of others," from the fact that we do not shun such objects, but approach them. "Terror is a passion which always produces delight when it does not press too closely; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it, is attended with delight, or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will; and as our Creator has designed that we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionate delight; and there most where our sympathy is most wanted—in the distresses of others."³⁴ Since this holds true of actual life he is unable to attribute any considerable part of our pleasure in tragedy to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. Proof of this is seen in the fact that an audience will leave a theatre even where every effort had been made to produce an illusion, should it be suddenly announced that a state criminal of high rank were on the point of being executed in the adjoining square. "In a moment the emptiness of the seats would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. I believe that this notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence, that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we would be eager enough to see if it was once done."³⁵ The case is further illustrated with the pleasure in viewing an earthquake or the results of a conflagration.

Burke's reasoning here indicates a familiarity with Dubos even though he differs from Dubos in his conclusions. In the discussion of

³⁴ I, sect. 14.

³⁵ I, sect. 15.

imitation he likewise covers ground made familiar by Dubos, who tried to show that the value of the imitation depended on the importance of the thing imitated. "I shall here venture to lay down a rule, which may inform us with a good degree of certainty when we are to attribute the power of the arts to imitation or to our pleasure in the skill of the imitator merely, and when to sympathy, or some other cause in conjunction with it. When the object represented in poetry or painting is such as we could have no desire of seeing in the reality, then I may be sure that its power in poetry or painting is owing to the power of imitation and to no cause operating in the thing itself. So it is with the most of the pieces which the painters call still-life. In these a cottage, a dunghill, the meanest and most ordinary utensils of the kitchen, are capable of giving us pleasure. But when the object of the painting or poem is such as we should run to see if real, let it affect us with what odd sort of sense it will, we may rely upon it, that the power of the poem or picture is more owing to the nature of the thing itself than to the mere effect of imitation, or to a consideration of the skill of the imitator, however excellent."³⁶

In Part II of the essay Burke takes up particularly the question of the Sublime. Dubos had held that the first consideration of poetry and art was to excite the passions. Moved by logic rather than experience, he had assigned a higher rank to painting than to poetry on the ground that painting was able to offer a clearer idea of the thing imitated. Burke not only rejects Dubos' theory at this point but shows at considerable length that the sublime is hostile to the idea of clearness and is rather concerned with such qualities as magnitude, obscurity, power, privation, vastness, infinity etc. In other words, not clearness of idea but strength of emotion, not the intellect but the passions. The type of sublimity he said which Burke has here in mind is from the context clearly that found in a Miltonian epic.

Part III has to do with the consideration of beauty. By beauty he meant "that quality or those qualities in bodies, by which they cause love, or some passion similar to it." Love he considers in this instance to be free from that element of desire or lust which he would define as "an energy of the mind that hurries us on to the possession of certain objects that do not affect us as they are beautiful, but by

³⁶ I, sect. 16.

means altogether different."³⁷ In other words Burke looks upon beauty as a quality in the object which directly awakens in us a pleasing emotion through the medium of the senses, without in any way being a creature of the understanding or requiring any assistance from the reason. "The appearance of beauty as effectually causes some degree of love in us as the application of ice or fire produces ideas of heat and cold."³⁸

Beauty being an immediate source of pleasure, he dismisses such principles as proportion, fitness, perfection etc., as positive elements of beauty since they are matters purely for the understanding, the reason. His theory at this point marks a distinct break from the rationalistic position found in Shaftesbury or Home or as interpreted by Diderot. This idea of proportion he thought "arose from false reasonings on the effects of the customary figures in animals; it arose from the Platonic theory of fitness and aptitude."³⁹ "*Deformity* is opposed not to beauty, but to the *complete common form*. If one of the legs of a man be found shorter than the other, the man is deformed, because there is something wanting to complete the whole idea we form of a man; and this has the same effect in natural faults, as maiming and mutilation produce from accidents."⁴⁰ As to the idea of utility or fitness to an end, this theory does not hold on examination, as is seen in the case of the great hanging bill of the pelican or the swine's snout, etc. "The effect of proportion and fitness, at least so far as they proceed from a mere consideration of the work itself, produces approbation, the acquiescence of the understanding, but not love, nor any passion of that species. When we examine the structure of a watch, when we come to know thoroughly the use of every part of it, satisfied as we are with the fitness of the whole, we are far enough from perceiving anything like beauty in the watch-work itself; but let us look at the case, the work of some curious artist in engraving with little or no idea of use, we shall have a much livelier idea of beauty than we ever could have had from the watch itself, though the master-piece of Graham. . . . We are rational creatures, and in all our works we ought to regard their end and purpose; the gratification of any passion, how innocent soever, ought only to be of a secondary

³⁷ III, sect. 1.

³⁸ III, sect. 2.

³⁹ III, sect. 4.

⁴⁰ III, sect. 5.

consideration. Herein is placed the real power of fitness and proportion; they operate on the understanding considering them, which *approves* the work and acquiesces in it. The passions, and the imagination which principally raise them, have here very little to do."⁴¹ As to whether beauty shall be applied to virtue, Burke again departs decidedly from previous writers. "The general application of beauty to virtue has a strong tendency to confound our ideas of this and it has given rise to an infinite deal of whimsical theory, as the affixing the name of beauty to proportion, congruity and perfection has tended to confound our ideas of beauty and left us no standard or rule to judge by. This loose and inaccurate manner of speaking has therefore misled us both in the theory of taste and of morals, and induced us to remove the science of our duties from their proper basis, (our reason, our relations, and our necessities) to rest it upon foundations altogether visionary and unsubstantial."⁴²

Having thus determined what beauty is not, Burke now seeks to show that "beauty is a thing much too affecting not to depend upon some positive qualities. And, since it is no creature of our reason, since it strikes us without any reference to use, and even where no use at all can be discerned, since the order and method of nature is generally very different from our measurements and proportions, we must conclude that beauty is, for the greater part, some quality in bodies acting mechanically upon the human mind by the intervention of the senses."

Part IV is an effort to demonstrate the "efficient cause of the sublime and beautiful." It is his aim "to determine *what* affections of the mind produce certain emotions of the body, and what distinct feeling and qualities of the body shall produce certain determinate passions in the mind, and no other." Why this effect results, he feels to be quite beyond his purpose and in any case impossible to determine; "only the sensible qualities of things can be our concern."

The explanation which Burke develops is that just as physical pain results in a sort of unnatural tension of the nerves, so fear and terror also. "The only difference between pain and terror is that things which cause pain operate on the mind by the intervention of the body, whereas things that cause terror generally affect the bodily organs by

⁴¹ III, sect. 7.

⁴² III, sect. 11.

the operation of the mind, suggesting the danger; but both agreeing, either primarily or secondarily, in producing a tension, contraction, or violent emotion of the nerves, they agree likewise in everything else."⁴³ Thus he considers that our minds and bodies are so closely and intimately connected that one is incapable of pain or pleasure without the other.

Since terror produces such an unnatural tension and certain violent emotions of the nerves, anything producing passion similar to terror produces a similar effect and may therefore be a source of the sublime.

That pain itself may be a positive pleasure is explained in a manner not many removes from Dubos, who however is not concerned with an organic explanation of pleasure. Burke notes the ill effects of too great relaxation in the body and the benefit which arises from labor or exercise. Such labor however represents "a surmounting of difficulties, an exertion of the contracting power of the muscles, and as such resembles pain, which consists in tension and contraction, in everything except degree." But he does not stop with the mere analogy and thinks it probable that the same may be said of the passions as well as the higher powers of the intellect. Terror then may be looked upon as the exercise of the finer parts of the system, and where it is not permitted to be carried to the extent of being noxious or violent, it may be said to produce a delightful horror, a "sort of tranquillity tinged with terror." Its object is the sublime.

His effort now is to show that certain visual objects are capable of awakening something akin to terror, or the sublime. For example great dimensions, vastness with unity, the infinite, the effect being to bring about an exertion of the nerves of the eye to such an extent as to approach the nature of what is pain. Similarly he explains darkness, there resulting such a contraction of the iris as to make a noticeable tension of the nerves. With respect to what is beautiful to the senses, the effect is quite the opposite; here those things are considered beautiful which cause no tension of the nerves, but rather a gentle relaxation of the body, producing a passion of love in the mind. Such for example are smoothness, sweetness, variation.

The last Part of the *Essay* is devoted to a discussion of words, where Burke clearly sees that words do not bear an exactly analogous

⁴³ IV, sect. 3.

relation to the means at the disposal of other arts. In nature as in painting there is a connection between certain motions and configurations of bodies and certain consequent feelings in our mind, but words affect us very differently than painting, nature or architecture. He comes then to the conclusion that poetry is concerned not so much with imitation, except in dramatic poetry, as it is with evoking a feeling of sympathy; it displays rather the effect of things on the mind of the speaker or others and does not aim to present a clear idea of the things themselves. He finds it necessary then to keep in mind the distinction between a clear expression and a strong expression, the former being for the understanding, the latter belonging to the passions and as such is the concern of the poet; the one describes the thing as it is, the other as it is felt. Thus words by conveying the passions make up for their weaknesses in other respects.

Burke's theory of taste appears as an introductory discourse to the *Essay on the Sublime*. Taste he defines as "that faculty or those faculties of the mind which are affected with or which form a judgment of, the works of the imagination and the fine arts." The three natural powers of man that he thinks are conversant with external objects, are the senses, the imagination and the judgment. Taste in its most general acceptation "is not a simple idea, but is partly made up of a perception of the primary pleasures of sense, of the secondary pleasures of the imagination, and of the conclusions of the reasoning faculty concerning various relations of these and concerning the human passions, manners and actions. All this is requisite to form taste, and the ground-work of all these is the same in the human mind." The principles of taste do not vary, variation in taste arising merely from the differences in sensibility of people and in their training and judgment. In any case he held, as did Dubos, that there was "less difference upon matters of taste among mankind than upon most of those which depend upon the naked reason." As regards the theory of the sixth sense Burke does admit that in the passions and the imagination the reason is little consulted so that there is the impression of a separate faculty of the human mind, but taste he held was some thing which could be improved as exactly as we improve our judgment, "by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise."

THE FRENCH MOVEMENT (*continued*)

There appeared during the 18th century in France three prominent thinkers who stood in direct opposition to the rationalistic and formalistic aesthetic movement which we have seen typified in the writings of Boileau and Batteux. These men were Dubos, Diderot and Rousseau. Of these three writers only Dubos and Diderot will be considered here. Admitting fully the importance of Rousseau in the philosophic and literary history of the time, and especially his emphasis on the senses and "feeling" as opposed to reason, one may still be at a loss to detect any great contribution in the way of specific theory. Rousseau's general position being so well known it is not necessary to do more than to remind ourselves of the fact that his thought and example gave tremendous weight to the general movement which we are here treating.

DUBOS

In his earlier days the Abbé Dubos was a Cartesian and a follower of Perrault,¹ but his relationship with Bayle was probably responsible to a large degree in preparing him for the definite break which he made with this school. A visit to England, where he came into the most intimate contact with Locke (1698) and where he made the acquaintance of Addison among others, was instrumental in bringing him over completely into the camp of the sensationalists. The *Réflexions critiques sur la Poésie et la Peinture*, which appeared in 1719,² is clearly grounded upon the empirical standpoint of English philosophy.

The *Réflexions* is perhaps the first systematic treatment of aesthetics in so far as we mean a theory of art which aims to secure the fundamental principles of the arts in general. In keeping aesthetics fairly free from questions of morality and in omitting metaphysical considerations he differed from his English predecessors. The fact that he kept the issue clear, that his treatment was thoroughgoing and in harmony with the essential position in the English movement, were factors which made his work of great importance not only in England, but in Germany as well. Its failure to secure a larger

¹ The apparent neglect of Dubos in the past, e.g., see Schasler, Bosanquet, etc.: seems the more remarkable in view of the position which he is coming more and more to have. Cf. Stein, Lombard, *Dubos, un Initiateur de la Pensée moderne*, Paris 1913, etc. Lombard if anything exaggerates Dubos' influence.

² Edition 1741 is here used.

following in France has already been largely accounted for in the strength of the traditional movement, and the explanation offered that its literary style militated against its acceptance has a certain amount of weight.

The first problem which Dubos faced was to account for the emotional pleasure in art and drama. The point which seemed to demand explanation was the fact that we enjoy in art and tragedy the depiction of those things which are in themselves the source of displeasure, a matter discussed among others by Addison. He throws this problem into boldest relief by considering the case of gladiatorial combats, bull fights, etc., where entire peoples were drawn to witness the sufferings of others. The conclusion which he finally reaches as an explanation of the entire phenomenon is that the mind left to itself suffers ennui. "This feeling of ennui which results from the inactivity of the soul is an evil of such a character that one will undertake even the most extreme labor to escape this torment."³ It is true, he adds, that the daily tasks to some extent overcome the difficulty, but where this does not suffice, two ways are open: the mind may be occupied by serious thought, i.e., through philosophy, a resource closed to the majority of people, or there is the larger possibility of emotional excitement, which is the field of emotional art.

Art and poetry, therefore, offer the best solution for this natural ennui since by these means the passions may be aroused without at the same time exposing the beholder to the evil consequences of what he is witnessing, and of which for the moment he is more or less a part. Thus art afforded a "pure pleasure."⁴ He also stated this positively by noting that the mind had needs like the body, e.g., the need of "being occupied." This purely emotional explanation of the source of pleasure in works of art and poetry leads to a conclusion, generally agreed upon by the critics, that Dubos explains the pathetic, but not the beautiful. He explains the "divertissement" as Lombard puts it, but the sense of beauty and the theory of imitation form only a weak portion of his theory. Stein holds his theory to be more a matter of pathology than a theory of the passions. It is in any case an emphasis upon the "sublime" rather than the "beautiful"; it is a question of emotional content rather than form,

³ I, 6.

⁴ I, 28.

and in so far is widely divergent from the main current of French thought.

Both poetry and painting have, according to Dubos, a common purpose, namely to move the beholder, to arouse in him through *artificial* or imitative means the same emotions that would have been aroused by the sight of the objects themselves which are imitated. "The copy of the object must so to speak excite in us a copy of the passion which the object itself would have excited."⁶ Imitation therefore is only with respect to the emotional content. Form, color, verse are all subordinate considerations. Art did not create an impression as strong as reality; it was at best an imitation and for that reason weaker in effect than the thing imitated, an "artificial being with borrowed life." It was therefore a cardinal doctrine that "in poetry and in painting imitations of nature touch us only in proportion to the impression which the thing imitated would make upon us were we to see it in reality."⁶ From this he may consistently conclude that the "imitation would be unable to move us, if the thing imitated were incapable of so doing,"⁷ which is an argument used to dispose of realistic genre paintings of the Teniers type. There is nothing in a village fête, he thinks, or the "divertissements ordinaires d'un corps de garde" which can move us. We can at best merely admire the imitative art of the painter and find fault with him at the same time for a choice of subject which can interest us so little. Likewise still life and landscapes without human figures were considered as inferior to the real purpose of art. "Soyez toujours pathétiques" was the dictum; "ne laissez languir ni vos spectateurs ni vos auditeurs." He reasons however that since painting can convey a clearer impression of the object, it was on a higher plane—a theory to which Burke objected.

The importance thus given to the emotional content led to the conception that imitation was an "impression of the passions," a copy not of the object, but a "copy of the passion which the object would have excited."⁸ In fact Dubos held to a certain ideal conception of imitation, which took into account that nature did not after all offer the models for the effects which he desired art to produce.

⁶ I, 25.

⁶ I, 54.

⁷ I, 51.

⁸ I, 25.

"One must copy nature without seeing it. One must be able to imagine with accuracy what the movements and circumstances are which one has never seen."⁹ The model which the painter has before him can give him only a part of what he wants to depict. "To show love crossed by jealousy from a model in repose, is no longer to depict from nature."¹⁰ The painter must add to the object in nature—and here is a disappointing and yet illuminating conclusion—"what he knows from the study of books(!) of the effect of passions upon the face, etc." "Invention" could be defined then as the proper motivation of the passion depicted. Dubos was clearly leaving the way open for the creative artist and he does in one instance use the term "create" with respect to this "new nature" which the poet and the artist produce.¹¹

The Renaissance doctrine of imitation of the ancients was given an interesting turn in that he recommended this be carried out with regard to the spirit,—“in the manner, rather than in direct imitation.”¹² In showing that a true imitation consists in the adaptation of what has formerly been done to the new conditions of the time in which the artist is living, and in considering Virgil as a model of this procedure in so far that he had adapted Homer to his own times, Dubos was not only anticipating Young, Herder, etc., but was giving clear evidence of the position which “milieu” was beginning to take in 18th century thought. “The man of genius divines how the workman proceeds. He sees him work, so to speak, in looking at his work and in grasping his manner; it is in the imagination that he gets his booty,” an idea recalling Renaissance criticism.

Dubos did not in general confuse aesthetic pleasure by an insistence upon moral ends. For example he ruled out dogmatic poetry almost absolutely, since it made no emotional appeal, maintaining repeatedly that poetry is read for pleasure and not instruction, and

⁹ I, 208.

¹⁰ A striking resemblance to this passage is in Winckelmann's essay on “Nachahmungen”: “Die innere Empfindung bildet den Charakter der Wahrheit, und der Zeichner, welcher seinen Academien denselben geben will, wird nicht einen Schalter des Wahren erhalten, ohne eigne Ersetzung desjenigen, was eine *ungerührte und gleichgültige* Seele des Models nicht empfindet, etc.” In contrast to these views Diderot's realism is seen in the fact that he recommended that the artist view the living models in the street rather than the model of the studio.

¹¹ I, 24.

¹² I, 85.

that one ceases reading the moment the pleasure ceases.¹³ That tragedy may work to a moral end he admits, and this he thinks is what is meant by "purgation." Purgation he interprets in the sense that the spectator is made conscious of the evil consequences of certain passions and may be led to be on his guard in the future. But this moral end is admitted only as a possibility and he distinctly states: "Let no one understand me to say that dramatic poetry is a sovereign and universal remedy in morality. I am too far from thinking anything of the kind. I only wish to say that dramatic poems *sometimes* correct men and often give them the desire of bettering themselves."¹⁴

The doctrine of "vraisemblance" played an important part in Dubos' theory. From one standpoint he accepted the definition of Aristotle with the significant distinction that he put the weight on passion instead of action. "One deserves the name of poet in rendering the action which one treats capable of *moving us*." The subject was approached from another standpoint equally characteristic for Dubos' thought. The ideal subjects for both poetry and art he deemed to be those taken from history, a natural conclusion in view of the practice of Corneille and Racine, Poussin and LeBrun. The probability that he desired was one with direct reference to the particular environment and age in which the original events took place. From this standpoint vraisemblance became associated, if not with historical truth, at any rate with the historical "milieu." "Poetic vraisemblance consists in giving the personages the passions fitting their age, dignity and the temperament which one gives them, as well as their particular interest in the drama. It consists in the observation of what the Italians call *il Costumè*, that is to say, in bringing about a conformity with what we know of the manners (*moeurs*), dress, buildings (the direct reference is clearly here to painting) and the particular arms of the peoples one wishes to represent."¹⁵ "It consists further in retaining the original appearance and character of the personages." That this was the sense in which Dubos most definitely considered vraisemblance is seen in the statement that we "admit in a drama as true the false suppositions which were received at the time the actions took place," thus clearly anticipating the confusion of historical truth and vraisemblance which Voltaire

¹³ I, 74.

¹⁴ I, 430.

¹⁵ I, 251. Cf. also 255.

supported particularly in the introduction to *Sémiramis* and for which he was directly attacked by Lessing.

Dubos openly discards reason as a basis for judgment in matters of art. Reason he associated with an adherence to principles, a testing of the conformity of works with the requirements of the rules. This he completely does away with, permitting to reason the sole task of examination of a work of art after a work has given pleasure and taste is satisfied. The real test of a work of art consisted alone in the effect it produced; if it succeeded in arousing pleasure through the excitement of the emotions, then it was accredited a success, however much it may have been in disagreement with the rules. Practical experience and not the rules was the guide. The man most likely to be chosen for the defense of a city, he states by way of analogy, was not a theorist, not a mathematician, but a man of experience.¹⁶

The organ which he considered fitted to determine the merit of a work of art was not reason, but a "sixth sense" which he calls "sentiment." "It is the same sense that would have judged the objects imitated. For color it is the eye. As to whether the accent of a *récit* is touching, as to words or melody, it is the ear. But whether the imitation moves or causes pity—It is the sixth sense in us although we cannot see the organ itself."¹⁷

The acceptance of an immediate sense for the merits of a work of art, did not in any way preclude the universal validity of this judgment. Men might easily differ with regard to their reasoning, their philosophy, but the hearts of men remained very much the same,¹⁸ a position not infrequently taken by English moral philosophers with regard to natural religion. Dubos is directly concerned with the overthrow of reasoning from a hypothesis, from abstract principles, and is putting in its place the rights of the senses. This is clear from the following statement:¹⁹ "Experience has made men see that one is rarely deceived by a distinct report of the senses, and that the habit of reasoning and judging this report conducts to a practice that is simple and sure, in place of erring every day by way of philosophy, i.e., by posing general principles and drawing from these a chain of conclusions."

¹⁶ II, 341.

¹⁷ II, 325.

¹⁸ II, 492.

¹⁹ II, 341.

The originality of Dubos' position is modified to some extent when we take into account the "public" he had in mind and which he considered as worthy judges of matters of taste. In spite of his arguments for the universal character of the emotional nature, he found no place for the "kitchen maids" of Molière and in fact for large classes of people. He admitted a public only which like himself was well versed in history, acquainted with ancient and modern art and literature, in short an educated and cultured public, grown up in the tradition of Louis XIV. The requirement which he assumed as necessary in this matter was a "*goût de comparaison*," which is of itself most illuminating with regard to his position. "Feeling" may well be brought forward to pass upon the universal values of works of art, provided one may assume a background of training and culture. His virtual acceptance of the standards of this age as well as of classical antiquity shows that after all he admitted a universal character of a definite sort in the works themselves which good taste would under the proper conditions recognize.

There still remains in this intensely interesting and important work of Dubos a consideration of his theory of climate, the influence of which was not confined to Montesquieu but was directly seen in the works of German writers, Winckelmann in particular. Through this theory of climate he hoped to offer a solution for the contemporaneous appearance of great literary and artistic movements and for the essential variation in art and literature both with respect to time and to location. The explanation for these phenomena he finds not in "moral causes," wherein he refers principally to the attitude of princes towards artists and poets, but in the "physical causes." Genius he considered to be the result of a proper disposition of the "organs of the brain"²⁰ and the quality of the blood. In so far then as the blood was itself conditioned by the character of the air he could point to climate as having a positive effect particularly upon a growing child and upon the development of geniuses. Thus it resulted that certain climates were favorable to the production of great art, where other countries, England for example, would for ever be without a native art, a fact which he believed was confirmed by the failure of such men as Holbein and Van Dyck to develop a school among English artists. The very character of Dutch art is due to the clouded skies of Holland.

²⁰ II, 52.

This entire theory he practically sums up in the analogy of a plant. "Genius is a plant which grows of itself, but the quality and quantity of its fruits are dependent upon the culture it receives."²¹ A plant that might grow to full height in one climate would be unable to do so if removed to another: and similarly the best art was confined by necessity to warm climates. That periods of art should vary within the same country is explicable on the analogy of harvests which vary from season to season in accordance with the weather conditions.

This theory of genius as the result of the favorable arrangements of the organs and the condition of the blood is interesting not only from the emphasis it throws upon determinative character of "milieu," but from the fact that within this portion of his work the sixth sense is taken literally as a special physical organ.

DIDEROT

It is a significant fact that one of the first works which came from the pen of Diderot was a liberal transcription of Shaftesbury's "*Inquiry concerning Virtue of Merit*," appearing in 1745. It seems to be a well grounded conclusion that the development of Diderot's aesthetic views bore from the first a very interesting relation to the theories of the great English moral philosopher.

While Shaftesbury considered that beauty was characterized by the harmony and proportion of Greek ideal art, it is true that he pointed out a certain relativity involved in beauty in so far as the individual object or part might be related to the whole. The question therefore of fitness, of adaptation to an end, came under consideration, a point of view, as Burke later pointed out, which often associated itself with the notion of ideal perfection. To approach the subject of beauty from the standpoint of the relation of parts to a whole or its various modifications is to run the risk of making beauty a purely intellectual conception, and if stressed too exclusively might lead far astray from the field of beauty as such. Diderot seems to have done something similar to this.

In one of Diderot's notes to the *Essay on Virtue* his interest in the aesthetic aspects of this theory may be noted. "In the universe the duties we have to fulfill determine the organization. The organization is more or less perfect according to the greater or lesser facility

²¹ II, 43.

which the automaton has received to perform its functions. For what is a beautiful man if it is not he whose well-proportioned members conspire in the most advantageous fashion for the performance of his functions." In this connection he states that monsters may be depicted in art provided that attention be paid to the proper organic relations.

In that portion of the article "*Beau*" written for the Encyclopedia in which he reviews previous theory on the subject of beauty, he criticizes Shaftesbury for considering beauty as that which is most perfectly ordered to secure the effect proposed, and for holding that behind the notion of a maximum beauty for each species is the idea that beauty consists in the proper functioning of all parts. In other words Diderot has here caught only a one-sided view of Shaftesbury, and the very thing he is here criticizing, in the end he accepts as a principle of art, if not of beauty, as will be seen later. In this connection, however, he goes on to criticize Shaftesbury for his conception of perfection, and indicates that beauty in an animal is a purely relative matter, the idea of a horse differing from the standpoint of a trainer and a passer-by. This general notion of the essentially relative nature of beauty is developed at considerable length in the body of the essay, and this he considers to be an original contribution to the field, no previous writer having attempted to define beauty and the Germans in particular having confused it with perfection.²² Beauty is essentially a matter of *rapport*, relativity. An object considered to be beautiful in itself, might not seem so when compared with other objects. I might like an object one minute and not another. An ugly object may contribute to beauty when its proper relationship is understood. In short, the one term which remains permanent through the changing aspects of beauty is *rapport*, and this very flexible term therefore is considered to be the thing we call beauty.

Diderot's reasoning leads him finally to pay little attention to beauty as such and to admit into art almost any element. Thus deformity he defends as perfectly proper, and he considers that a hunchback is a distinct source of pleasure in so far as nature has made the entire muscular formation of the body to conform to this deformity. This, it seems to us, is a Shaftesbury conception of totality deprived of the finer sense for Greek beauty. The essential

²² See Mendelssohn below.

difference between the two positions is more than an essential divergence of ideas; it was temperamental and it was based on a profound difference in philosophic attitude. Shaftesbury had seen the universe as a totality, an organism, so to speak, emanating from a living spirit within, in which everything was conceived as a perfection inherent in the whole. Diderot's earlier shifting views had gradually given way from a theism not unlike that of Shaftesbury's to a belief in a universe of forces in which determinism of scientific law held sway, and this was applicable finally to man in his relation to the moral order. Every fact was an evidence of world structure, of world order, in which human actions were the resultant of forces.

Such a materialistic point of view led him far away from the beauty of the classic ideal. "Nature makes nothing which is incorrect. Every form, beautiful or ugly, has its cause, and of all beings which exist, there is not one which is not as it must be."²³ Art seems therefore to have no other concern than to make clear the cause which produces the effect. "If causes and effects would be evident, we would have nothing better to do than to represent creatures just as they are. The more perfect the imitation, the more analogous to the causes, the more satisfied we would be." Not ideal beauty, but truth of fact, truth of cause and effect. "A distorted nose gives no offense because in nature everything shows causal relation" (*tout se tient*). Goethe's commentaries on the *Neveu de Rameau* of Diderot, which he translated, show the essential divergence between a thinker of Diderot's type and one who accepted the complete notion of a Greek ideal beauty. According to Goethe Diderot had failed to distinguish art from nature.²⁴

Diderot's theories of the drama represent in the main an effort to secure a form of the drama which would be the surest vehicle for the moral end he thought it should have in view. It is perfectly clear in following Diderot that he had little power of appreciation for either tragedy or poetry. "Poetry requires something of the enormous, of the barbarous, of the savage."²⁵ "Arts of imitation demand something of the savage, the brutal, the striking, the enormous."²⁶ "When is it that nature prepares the models for art? It is when

²³ *Essai sur la Peinture*, X, 461.

²⁴ See Morley, *Diderot and the Encyclopedists*.

²⁵ VII, 371.

²⁶ X, 502.

children tear each other's hair at the bedside of a dying father, where a mother opens her breast and conjures her son by the breasts he has milked, or when the friend cuts his hair and spreads it over the body of his friend. . . . I do not say these *moeurs* are good, but they are *poetic*." He undertakes to advance his theory of the drama not in the sense of a reform of tragedy or of comedy, both of which fields he deliberately tries to avoid, but with a positive aim in view, which was the creation of a new and distinct form of dramatic art whose end was virtue, morality. "One distinguishes in every moral object a middle and two extremes. It seems that every dramatic action being a moral object, it would be necessary to have a middle genre and two extremes. We have the two extremes in comedy and tragedy, but one is not always in joy or sadness. There is then a point of separation between the comic and tragic genres."²⁷ He shows then that there may be a genre in which neither pity and terror on the one hand nor laughter on the other may be aroused, but rather our interest. "There will be interest where the subject is important, where the poet uses the tone we have in our business affairs, and where the action advances by perplexity and embarrassment. Then since the actions are the most common in life, the genre which has them for its object must be the most useful and the most extensive. I will call this genre the *genre sérieux*. "I repeat *l'honnête, l'honnête!* It touches us in a more intimate manner or more sweetly than what merely excites our contempt (tragedy) or our laughter (comedy). Pick this chord and you will find a resounding and a trembling in all hearts. The *parterre* of comedy is the only place where the tears of the virtuous and wicked are mingled. There the wicked man is aroused by the injustices he might have committed, he is indignant at a man of his own character. The impression remains. He leaves the theatre less inclined to do evil, than if he had been harangued by an orator. I wish that all the arts might combine to this end."²⁸

Out of this desire to secure a proper conveyance for moral teaching grew his theory that conditions, professions, etc., (*états, conditions*) should be depicted on the stage rather than individual characters. Comedy, he thought, dealt with types or species, and tragedies with individuals. "There are no longer characters to be put upon the stage,

²⁷ VII, 134 ff.

²⁸ VII, 312.

but conditions. Up to the present in comedy, character has been the principal object and conditions etc., accessory. To-day conditions must be the principal object and character accessory." In other words just as he illustrated the case in *The Natural Son* and *The Father of the Family*, so he believed that for every profession and station of life there was a possible drama and the individual character which was to represent this particular *état* or *condition*, was the last and least consideration.

In spite of Diderot's appeal for a kind of naturalism, he was never willing to break from the traditional form of French dramatic art. A logical development of his views demanded this. Germany did not hesitate to take this step, the Sturm and Stress drama owing much to Diderot after he had been made clear to them through the efforts of Lessing. But it is interesting to note with what tenacity he holds to simplicity in the matter of stage production, in the observance of unities, and in a stricter interpretation of the correspondence between the time of stage production and the time which would have been taken for the events to have transpired in actual life. His appeal for the simplicity of Greek tragedy, was based on the theory that the perfect illusion was thereby facilitated, and from his first attack on stage production in the *Bijoux Indiscrets* to the end he favored an effort to secure an impression of real life, and complexity of plot and character he consistently opposed because it destroyed illusion.

Diderot devoted much time to the study of pantomime, that is, to the question of emotional expression through gesture, etc. His letter on the deaf mutes was concerned largely with a question of this nature. He upheld a free display of the emotions in art and was much more concerned with this element of stage production than with the actual words, as his practice of going to the theatre and following the development of the play with ears closed, might well indicate.²⁹ Out of this same general viewpoint grew his theory of *tableaux* where he favored the frequent grouping of the actors on the stage so as to give a clear as well as artistic picture of the particular moment. He even favored the view that a poet should leave much to the actor so that the inspiration of the moment would prompt him to give free expression to the emotion. The theory that the actor should lose himself to such an extent in the action that he would be forgetful of

²⁹ Lettre sur les Sourds et les Muets.

himself represents the extreme viewpoint of his earlier ideas with regard to emotional expression on the stage, which was changed later in the *Paradoxe sur le Comédien*, because he realized finally that acting was a conscious art.

In painting, which he discusses at great length in the "Salons," one may note the tendency already seen in Dubos to stress the content of the picture, i.e., the story, above considerations of pure art, although he was more and more led to see a technique in color, in design, etc. The historical group picture of a LeBrun was still held in as high repute by Diderot as by his predecessors. But there is this to be noted, that he remained true to his interest in the moral issue, and was led to see a greater value in paintings whose subjects were drawn from common life than had been the case of Dubos, whose theory of imitation was hostile to genre painting. This is seen in his favorable attitude towards Teniers. Appreciation for the ideal beauty of Greek art is consistently lacking.

THE GERMAN MOVEMENT

The aesthetic movement in Germany was of a more intricate nature than in either England or France. Preceding Gottsched and the Swiss, German theory had been a pale reflection of the various French schools. With the entrance of English influences, partly through the medium of Bodmer and Breitinger and even of Gottsched, the situation at once took on a complex nature. And it is interesting that the French movement had itself assumed a two-fold character and was able to furnish material to opposing camps in Germany; for the struggle between Gottsched and his opponents, which is generally considered to be a rivalry of French and English ideas for mastery in Germany, was superseded by a "quarrel" which centred about the writings of Batteux and in which the opposition was fortified by theories taken in part from Dubos.

In addition to these various forces at play in Germany there was a fundamental strain of German thought which was responsible for the character of the German contribution in this field and which distinguishes it from either the French or English movements. This proceeded directly from German philosophy and found its first embodiment in the writings of Johann Gottlieb Baumgarten. By the time of the appearance of his first work, *de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* (1735) Leibnitzian philosophy was not only firmly established, but the particular turn given it by the efforts of Wolff had directly opened the way for the construction of aesthetic theory. Baumgarten's claim to a pre-eminent position in this movement is in taking this step and initiating aesthetic theory in Germany on a basis of Wolff-Leibnitzian philosophy.

The origin of this movement is to be found ultimately in Descartes. In fact the full consequences of Cartesian rationalism are to be sought for in Germany rather than in France.¹ It has already been pointed out that the idealizing tendency which the French had inherited from Renaissance criticism and art had prevented in part an immediate fruition of Cartesian thought in France and by the time reason had gotten full hold of the "Moderns," a counter influence in Dubos had set in, and the way opened for English empiricism. In Germany,

¹ See Dilthey, *Die drei Epochen der mod. Aesth.* Deutsche Rundschau 72:200 ff.

where aesthetic theory was in part an outgrowth of philosophy, the case was different, and it is possible to observe the manner in which Cartesian ideas found further development in Leibnitz and quite as much in Wolff, who is more representative of the Cartesian manner of thought than his greater predecessor.

From Descartes Leibnitz took over the terms "clear" and "distinct" as applied to ideas and gave them a meaning which opened the way for their later use in German aesthetics. He took into account not only the eternal truths, which were the main interest of Descartes, but recognized the facts of experience—an old idea but now fortunately resurrected. "That idea is *clear* which is surely distinguished from all others and so is adequate for the recognition of its object; that idea is *distinct* which is clear even to its particular constituent parts and to the knowledge of their combination. According to this the *à priori*, 'geometrical' or 'metaphysical' eternal truths are clear *and* distinct; while on the other hand the *à posteriori*, or the truths of experience are clear, indeed, but not distinct."² Through the senses man is able to gain a certain total impression of things which is called a "clear" idea. For an object to be more than "clear," that is, for an object to be "distinct," it is necessary for the mind to grasp every detail with the same distinctness it does the whole and to be conscious of all the relationships. Manifestly with the limitations of the human mind many objects will never be more than "clear," and while admitting this, Leibnitz still insists that the chief aim of the soul is in the direction of "distinct" ideas. We find therefore the use of the terms "clear" and "confused" to indicate the objects of sense where a "clear" totality is necessarily made up of "indistinct" parts.

The German philosophic movement, following the tendency of the time, began to give increasingly positive value to the facts of experience and to accept less apologetically the "confused" impression of things. In this respect Wolff marked an advance over Leibnitz, showing the influence of the English empiricists. Baumgarten, following him, accepted "confused" ideas as the particular realm of poetry and in so doing took a step which gradually permitted German theory to break away from the rationalistic tendency which was prevailing. It is at this point that Mendelssohn, as opposed to Sulzer, became the immediate successor of Baumgarten.

² Windelband-Tufts, *History of Philosophy*.

Leibnitz' theory of the monad found its way equally into the aesthetic discussion of the time. According to Leibnitz the sole activity of the monad, or let us say, soul, consisted in what Leibnitz called representations. The universe he conceived quite similarly to Spinoza as a whole in which all parts were involved, each part being a complete representation of the whole. Leibnitz however considered the universe as made up of "immaterial forces," or thought activity. Soul life consisted then in a gradual awakening to a consciousness of those ideas which reveal its position in the universe; not acquisition from without but unfolding, developing of latent powers within. The life of the soul was the exercise and development of its function of perception or thought. The very act of perception gives pleasure to the soul in so far as it assists in the exercise or evolution of the monad from confused to distinct ideas.

The terminology thus brought into favor in Germany by Leibnitz, was given even greater carrying power by Wolff. With greater definiteness than Leibnitz, Wolff points out the positive character in the "dark, confused" ideas. He believed, for example, that the "confused ideas," which represented the contribution of the senses, would in the end confirm the distinct ideas attained through the reason, both being two means of arriving at the same end. However he still tended to consider these "dark faculties," (literally "lower faculties,") as inferior.

Baumgarten takes the step of considering "confused ideas" as the essential field of poetry and builds up the theoretical portion of his aesthetics on this basis. From now on for several decades the "lower faculties," "dark faculties," "dark," "confused," "clear," "distinct ideas" are accepted as the technical language of an important group of writers on aesthetics. This is quite as true of the use of "Vorstellung" and "Vollkommenheit." Since these writers accepted "confused ideas" as the field of aesthetic pleasure it was natural that they would take into account a theory of "Vorstellung," i.e., a theory of the manner in which the mind secures ideas or representations. This was the inheritance from Leibnitz and this entire school had one distinct aim in view, to show that the thought processes involved in securing "ideas" of poetry and art, as in the case of other "ideas" was consistent with the fundamental notion that there was one ultimate faculty of the human soul, namely that of securing of "Vorstellungen," "representations," "ideas." Hence the opposition later to

followers of Hutcheson in Germany with their three fundamental faculties or departments of the human soul. This is what both Mendelssohn and Herder had in mind when they criticized writers in France and England for not having a knowledge of German philosophy. The first consideration of German theory, therefore, as far as the immediate followers of Baumgarten were concerned was not formal, objective, but subjective, considering first of all the manner in which the mind secures ideas of beauty. At just this point Winckelmann's ideas proceeding from the standpoint of objective art, as far as sculpture is concerned, occupy a distinctly different field.

BAUMGARTEN³

Baumgarten's most famous work, the "Aesthetica," was begun in 1750, although the essential standpoint with regard to aesthetics was already a part of his earlier work where we find his famous definition of beauty in the terms of the Wolfian school: "Poema est oratorio sensitiva perfecta." Baumgarten's theory does not take into account any of the arts, confining itself merely to poetry, and he follows the theoretical portion of his work with a sort of poetics where, quite oblivious to his original standpoint, he accepts much of Latin theory as a basis for poetic creation. This latter portion was without influence, the theoretical conception which considered aesthetics as a science being that portion which bore fruit.

The use of the term *sensitiva* in his definition of poetry needs explanation. Stein takes this up with considerable fullness. "Confused" representations, not "distinct" representations, are the field of poetry. "Deutliche, vollständige, entsprechende, gründliche Vorstellungen sind nicht sensitiv."⁴ Baumgarten implies a sort of fullness and richness in what is presented to the senses. While it is of the nature of sensuous representations to be "confused" it does not follow that they are for that reason obscure. The details to be sure may be indistinct, but the impression of the whole must be clear. This Baumgarten called *extensive* clear as opposed to *intensive* clear,

³ Stein, Die Entstehung der neueren Aesthetik. Hettner, Gesch. d. Lit. des 18. Jhs. IV, 74. Justi, Winckelmann, Seine Werke und seine Zeitgenossen. Leipzig, 1866. Sommer, Die poetische Lehre Alexander Gottlich Baumgartens, München, 1911. Baumgarten, Aesthetica.

⁴ Stein.

or distinct. The former is the science of aesthetics, the latter is aesthetic pleasure. Baumgarten's contribution is at this point, i.e. he makes sensuous perception the sole basis for an aesthetic theory.

Sensitiva has the further meaning, namely that of arousing the emotions. *Affectus movere est poeticum*. It is at this point that Baumgarten is considered to evidence the immediate influence of Dubos, with whose work we know he was acquainted. While this is not to be denied, the critics seem not to take sufficiently into account that the position which Baumgarten takes toward the question of the emotional effect is one quite different in nature from that of Dubos. Or perhaps it may be correct to say that, convinced of the value of the emotional excitement in poetry, Baumgarten attempts to account for this along lines set down by Leibnitz and Wolff. As did Leibnitz, he recognizes the pleasure that comes to the soul in the act of representation, or securing "ideas," but he puts particular emphasis on the pleasure which arises from grasping a perfection through the lower senses, by the fact that the mind through this means gains a truth not accessible through the upper faculties. According to Stein, Baumgarten goes further with this idea by showing that a poet gives more than he really represents, and on the other hand the reader finds more in a poem than is actually represented. Poetry is not merely description, but works through images, through visualizations. Through the suggestion of the image we grasp the content. The image is suggestive of the larger thought. This being true, the pleasure of poetry comes in the fact that it makes accessible through art a truth, by a symbolism if you will, not otherwise possible. Whether or not Baumgarten is subject to this interpretation, there is no doubt of the fact that theoretically he accepted at its full value the positive emotional element in poetry and tried to explain it on a Leibnitzian basis.

Involved in this conception of the pleasure in art is the notion that the work of art is perfect. The unity of the parts must be clear, in order that the "idea" of the whole may be clearly conveyed through the senses. In a poem Baumgarten considered this unity in the sense of a central theme, a single thought, a single purpose.⁶ As the work progresses, so the theme reveals itself, just as in nature the plan of the Creator gradually reveals itself. Nature is

⁶ These terms are so defined by Stein.

an *extensive* (that is to the senses) clear impression of the divine plan. The poet may be said to proceed likewise in putting in *extensive* clear, that is, sensuous form, his idea. In so far the poet corresponds to the great Creator.

Beauty is perfection within the realm of sense perception. In dealing with perfection Baumgarten tended to throw the stress upon the subjective element and consider less the formal attributes of objects. In any case it is significant to note that instead of considering unity in variety, fitness, uniformity, simplicity etc., as the essential character of beauty, which were the heirlooms of the classic conception of art, he offered quite different categories, which take more directly into account the sensation itself and the content. His requirements are as follows: *Uebertas*, fullness, abundance; *Magnitudo*, significance; *veritas*, aesthetic truth, rather than intellectual truth; *claritas*, or *lux*, concerned with light, shade, coloring etc., (these two mean a full, complete expression); *certitudo*, and *vita*, animation. *Lux* has to do with the manner of expression, i.e., form, and *vita* with the content.

Baumgarten's purpose was clearly an effort to offer a theory of aesthetics which would be in harmony with Leibnitzian philosophy. Whatever theory he may have taken from Dubos and others was made to conform to this viewpoint. It meant in fact that Baumgarten considered aesthetics as a part of psychology and it is for this that he is praised by Herder. The weakness of the *Aesthetica* is that it confined itself to poetry and attempted to look upon aesthetics both as a science and as a school for the poet, both of which weaknesses are pointed out later by Herder. Its strength lay in the positive attitude towards the so-called "lower faculties," in seeing that poetry accepted sensuous ideas as its special field.

SULZER

Sulzer and Mendelssohn were the immediate successors of Baumgarten. Sulzer's first real contribution to aesthetics appeared within the first two years following the appearance of Baumgarten's *Aesthetica*, the occasion being his admittance to the Academy at Berlin. At that time aesthetics was for him practically a new field. His early plan to engage in the ministry was abandoned shortly after his ordination, and from the days of his schooling at the Akademischen Gymnasium at Zurich until the late 40's his interests were confined to natural science and to philosophy, in which there was at all times a

strong moral tendency. His conversion to Wolffian philosophy took place during his academic days, at a time when he was in intimate personal relations with Gessner. The didactic tendency which we are wont to look for in the Swiss revealed itself in a striking manner in 1746 when he proposed a system of education in which both philosophy and science were to be subordinated to the development of the "man" and offered a system based on the development of "clear ideas" which should begin with the earliest childhood.

The "Versuch über die angenehmen und unangenehmen Empfindungen" was his first and perhaps most important contribution in the field of aesthetics before the appearance of his *Allgemeine Theorie* (1772), on which his fame finally rested. It was an attempt to explain the nature of all pleasure, aesthetic, moral and intellectual, and to show that this pleasure is due to a single fundamental faculty of the human soul. This effort he considered original. He noted that Wolff had developed the so-called intellectual faculties of the soul, but neither he nor Descartes had shown that the origin of all pleasant and unpleasant sensations lies in the one fundamental impulse (Grundtrieb) of the human soul. Instead of emphasizing the essential differences of the intellectual and aesthetic pleasure, as Baumgarten had in reality done, Sulzer attempts to explain everything by what is in fact an intellectual principle inherent within the soul, which leads him ultimately to a form of rationalism scarcely equalled by any of his contemporaries. He does not ignore the distinction of distinct and confused ideas, nor does he hold that these two notions will be harmonized; the pleasure in perceiving an object will never cease to be a pleasure in "confused ideas." But all reduces itself finally to the fact that the soul in exercising its function of thought or perception (Vorstellung) finds pleasure wherever a variety is made accessible by reason of an essential unity.

Pleasure or displeasure is explained as a question of freedom or hindrance experienced by the mind in exercising its faculty of cognition. Where no obstacle is present, the soul enjoys satisfaction, rather than pleasure. Compared to a state of hindrance this would be pleasure. Pleasure is not merely the absence of hindrance, but results when the soul is aroused to its full activity. An unobstructed impression of many things at once would lead to such a pleasure. The mind notes a larger "nourishment" and with it comes the desire to centre upon this. The moment the desire is satisfied or ceases,

pleasure falls back to the mere sense of satisfaction (Gefallen). Thus pleasure is an extraordinary condition of the soul which experience must satisfy. The only way in which the mind can grasp a number of objects easily, without hindrance, is when there is an arrangement, such that they all bear a relation to the whole. Obviously pleasure is made to consist in the grasping of a totality, and not in the detail.

Pleasures he divides into three classes: the pleasures of the senses, the pleasures of the heart (morality), and the intellectual pleasures. Since all pleasures are in the end due to the intellectual faculty of the soul, he treats this first, and it is interesting to note that under this category he considers beauty.

1. Beauty is accepted as unity within multiplicity. It is in the main objective. He notes, for example, that it was first applied to objects of sight⁶ but is equally applicable to what is received by the other senses. This includes poetry, since imagination he holds to be only a supplement to the senses. "There are innumerable objects which are called beautiful and which belong neither to the imagination nor the senses. They are presented to the understanding through distinct conceptions (Begriffe). These objects are composed of a number of ideas which united form a *beautiful whole*. Of such nature is a beautiful theorem (Lehrsatz), a beautiful thought, a beautiful system, a beautiful drawing, a beautiful character, a beautiful action. In mechanics, in the plan of the world, in the marvelous adaptation of its parts, and in the sciences, there is to be found this kind of beauty which I call intellectual beauty." For the unity here involved he suggests the term interest. On such a basis it is not strange that he made the "passions for the arts and the passions for geometry" analogous.

Of the two elements of unity and variety he puts much the greater emphasis upon the latter. Thus in science and philosophy the greater the diversity of facts comprehended in the unity, the greater the beauty. "A work of art is the more beautiful, the more perfect it is, the more parts it has and the more these parts contribute to a purpose." From this standpoint he proceeded to a purely quantitative application to art. A simile he thought less beautiful than an allegory and a drama less beautiful than an epic purely on the basis of the number of facts thus unified.

⁶ Cf. Home, Herder.

Since taste is intellectual in character, it follows that a variation of taste will be due to the ability of the individual mind to grasp unity in a totality presented. Sulzer goes into an extended consideration of this point wherein the question of environment, of education, early training, of opportunity are made responsible for the varying intellectual development among men, in consequence of which arises a variation in the appreciation of beauty. "Trained to an appreciation of Watteau or Wouwerman, one will find little pleasure in lesser painters." He has much to say further regarding the relativity of our judgments, due to the association of ideas, wherein he shows how our ideas may be affected by earlier impressions or by circumstances, all of which at the moment may rise to the point of consciousness. Our dislike for a person or a picture or a peculiarity in judgment is thus traceable to early impressions.⁷ It is to be noted however that in spite of the reasons which are thus assigned for a variation of taste, he held most strictly to the notion of fixed and universal standards. It was a question merely of overcoming the restrictions of one's environment. Men thoroughly traveled should arrive at such a standard of judgment. Artists of varying taste would ultimately agree if fully informed of the laws and conditions of their art.

2. The question of the merely sensuous pleasures Sulzer attempts to explain upon a purely physical basis. The nerves being affected by impressions from without carry to the soul an impression that is analogous to the one received. The senses differ only as the nerves differ, each group of nerves being so located and so sensitized as to receive only its proper sensations—this from a quantitative standpoint. The finer the sense the less its emotional value, hence the following order: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch.

The theory which follows is based undoubtedly upon the mathematical theory of music popular at the time⁸ and applied by analogy to the other senses. The nerves he thought were in no case affected by a single prolonged stroke, but by a series of individual strokes or beats. A regular succession of such strokes would produce a single tone. The rapid succession of the strokes or beats which occur in a high tone gives greater pleasure than the slower succession in low tones, by the increased activity which it brought the soul. Too high

⁷ This fact is taken over by Herder.

⁸ Cf. Euler, Dalember, Diderot, etc. Sulzer met Euler in Berlin in 1746.

or too low would be disagreeable. In the matter of combinations of tones, he tried to diagram for the eye the mathematical or rhythmical grouping of beats that would be experienced when a harmonious combination of tones is struck, as for example the common chord of C. In this fashion he found it possible to uphold his theory consistently that the soul finds pleasure in its ability to grasp an orderly arrangement of objects or impressions. But the pleasures of the senses he considered below those of the intellect, partly for the reason that they are enjoyed less in memory and therefore cannot be restored readily to the imagination.

The three different methods of grasping beauty are therefore, according to Sulzer, through the senses, through the imagination and through the intellect. The intellectual beauty is, we may say, the beauty of content. The sensuous beauty is the beauty of colors, figures, symmetry, harmony, melody—and for the latter beauty he sought, as has just been shown, to give an explanation based on the physics of these senses. Admitting that the senses other than sight give pleasure, he excludes them from the realm of "beauty" because they give *only* "confused ideas," which again makes clear his fundamental theory of the one principle within the human mind. The imagination was not taken as a distinct field, but was considered a supplement to the senses, as Herder did later.

3. Of the three classes of pleasures Sulzer gives the position of pre-eminence to moral pleasures. His position is in the main in harmony at this point with Shaftesbury and the English moralists. He considers the taste for the sensuous, the taste for the beautiful (intellectual) and the taste for the good as "the three graces with a common mother." And he states that virtue can be nothing else than a facility (*Fertigkeit*) in furthering the happiness of one's self and others. "This is not a question of judgment, nor custom, nor education, but these selfish and altruistic tendencies are implanted in us. One virtue, one morality." In its natural state the essential impulses of the soul produce a taste for the beautiful and the good, and man is happy. The great interest of man consists in listening to the voice of nature which calls him to the beautiful and the good."

While Sulzer conceives of the superior rank of moral pleasures, and seems to suggest a moral sense, he actually goes back to the intellectual explanation of the source of moral pleasure, and, it is important to note, does not here discuss aesthetic pleasure as further-

ing the cause of morality. Man's happiness consists ultimately in adjusting himself as an individual to the demands of society. The pleasure of the mind consists therefore in properly grasping this relationship. What might be a pleasure for the moment would cease to be so when viewed with regard to society or to possible consequences. Much of this is suggestive of Shaftesbury. "As soon as a man has accustomed himself to see other men as a part of himself, then he becomes a friend of society, and gets pleasure in its welfare. There is a pleasure for each kind of life and each position or profession."⁹ That is, one may always feel himself part of a smaller group. Thus moral pleasures are more universal and immediate than intellectual pleasures and they have the further advantage in being stronger in their effect upon us.

On the whole then Sulzer has ranged the three types of pleasure side by side, and has tried to show that the pleasure which the mind ultimately secures in intellectual, sensuous and moral matters is due primarily to the fact that they engage the mind and offer it a large number of facts and in a manner that enables the mind to grasp easily the totality presented, and thus add these facts to its possession. He has in reality distinguished beauty of content from beauty of form but has sought to subject the latter to the same original principle which he has offered to explain the former. The strong rationalistic element is evident.

After the writing of this first work, Sulzer came into active touch with Mendelssohn and from that time the writings of the two men show a reciprocal influence.

In 1759 Sulzer took up the "Erklärung eines Paradoxes, etc.," the paradox which had appeared in the first essay, namely that man acts and passes judgment often without incentive (Antrieb) and without any visible reason. His explanation is based upon the distinction of clear and dark ideas, in which he has recourse to the well known example of a picture in which the whole is clear to the beholder, but the individual parts in the main obscure, though in default of any one of the details a difference would be noted. The discussion is valuable to our purpose only in so far as it now emphasized the possibility of art as a basis for moral betterment. Distinct ideas have little power to move; this he had demonstrated quantitatively in the first essay

⁹ Hume?

wherein it was shown that distinct ideas are possible only in single details, the number of nerves affected is thereby limited and hence the quantity of sensation less. Without discussing the merits or weaknesses of this position, we may easily see the logical deduction to which this leads him. Since distinct ideas have little power to move, so art might well serve the purpose of putting truths in the form of "confused" ideas, that is in putting them into a form in which the senses grasp an agreeable impression of a whole, and the quantity of sensation or emotion, if you will, is such that it may more readily reflect itself in moral action. In this manner truth would be given greater motive force. In this way the moral value in poetry and art, characteristic of the time, was explained as an integral part of his general conception.

In the "Essay on Genius" (1757) Sulzer accepts Dubos' definition and defines genius as a greater animation (*Lebhaftigkeit*) of soul whereby greater desires are engendered, and the individual is gradually led to a more intense development along this or that form of literature or art.

In the "Philosophische Betrachtungen über die Nützlichkeiten der dramatischen Dichtkunst" (1760) which is intended apparently to serve as a refutation of Rousseau's attack upon the theatre, Sulzer comes out more strongly for the moral possibilities in poetry, particularly drama, than he had done before. He conceives of the drama as something which should represent the "ideally beautiful." However much the dramatist might sin against historical truth, he must be morally true with regard to the situations and characters. "The dramatic action presents the fact not as it should be to an eye witness, but as a higher intelligent being would see it . . ." What he desires is perfect moral types. He is accordingly averse to the usual "prejudice" whereby a virtuous man succumbs upon the stage, and sees no reason why a happy outcome should not move quite as much as an unhappy one. The stage would therefore be able to furnish man with pictures which would include all the moral truths in material forms. The mere names of Tartuffe and Harpagon would show the hypocrite or the miser better than the best philosopher with his definitions. To a young man going astray one would say: "Young man, remember Barnwell!"¹⁰ This has all been more or

¹⁰ Merchant of London.

less strongly reminiscent of Diderot, whom he in fact quotes here in support of this position.

From the formal standpoint Sulzer adhered strictly to classical ideals as he understood them. This is seen in the attempt he made in the early 70's to prepare *Cymbeline* for the German stage by remodeling it with respect to the three unities, which shows how little he was affected by the Storm and Stress movement of the time. The sense of "visible totality" was an essential part of Sulzer's rationalistic attitude, from which Lessing's conception of dramatic unity is in reality not far removed.¹¹

In an article entitled "Anmerkungen über die verschiedenen Zustände, worin sich die Seele bei Ausübung ihrer Hauptvermögen, nämlich des Vermögens, sich etwas vorzustellen und des Vermögens etwas zu empfinden befindet" (1763) Sulzer has been brought, possibly because of Mendelssohn, to separate more distinctly these two faculties of the soul. This is interesting in so far as it is an evidence of the gradually extended place that is being accorded feeling at this time. The distinction which he brings to the front is found both in Shaftesbury and Mendelssohn and even in Batteux and is part of the attempt to separate intellectual truths from sensuous truths. In the understanding the mind busies itself with the object outside of itself; in the feeling the soul feels *itself*, is conscious of its own condition (Zustand); in the one case ideas have to do with the objects without relation to ourselves, in the other case the relation to ourselves is prominent and we are the more conscious of our own feeling than of the object. The close connection between moral and aesthetic feeling is as apparent here as in Shaftesbury for example. It may be noted further that one of the outstanding features of the *Allgemeine Theorie* which did not appear until the 70's, was this relation which poetry and art bear to morality.

MENDELSSOHN

The position of Mendelssohn during this period was one of great prominence. It is necessary only to recall the large number of articles either dedicated to him or issued in the form of letters

¹¹ The discussion of Hamlet's soliloquy in this essay recalls the fact that a translation of this could have been found by him in Mendelssohn's "Hauptgrundzüge."

addressed to him to realize this. He was either in personal touch or in active correspondence with nearly all the prominent men of his time. He was a person of broad sympathies, and profoundly interested in the intellectual movements of his time.

In the "Briefe über die Empfindungen" (1755) Mendelssohn makes it a point to clear up a confusion into which rationalistic thought had brought aesthetic theory, namely the consideration of beauty as synonymous with perfection. Diderot had anticipated him in this regard in his article "Beau" where he called attention to this essential error of the Wolffian school, but his own theory of "rapport" was not accepted in Germany as a solution of the difficulty. Mendelssohn showed that as far as art is concerned it is incorrect to speak of an antithesis of "distinct" and "confused" ideas. As a rational being, we are capable of "distinct" ideas, but we are by nature predominantly sensuous and our ideas are to this extent limited. We are unable to have a distinct idea of an object as a whole and at the same time in all its relations and details. Consequently we have no immediate perception of what is truth or perfection except to a limited extent. This being true with regard to objects in nature it is equally so with regard to art. Beauty is a result or a compensation for the fact that man is limited in his ability to perceive truth. Beauty does not exist for an infinite being to whom everything is accessible as truth.

Beauty being a matter of "confused" ideas the antithesis which may with accuracy be applied to art is "dark" and "clear," it being the aim of the artist to avoid that which is too extensive or too small, as Aristotle had pointed out, and thereby secure a "clear" impression for the senses. Art being thus viewed with respect to the senses perfection in the object was not viewed by Mendelssohn as a merely logical unity in plurality, i.e., *Einheit in Mannigfaltigkeit*, but as *Einerlei (Einhelligkeit, Uebereinstimmung) in Mannigfaltigkeit*, by which he could mean nothing more than a unified sense impression. A failure to discover the distinction which Mendelssohn here points out, accounts for the fact that rationalistic thought, as in the case of Sulzer, had gone to such extremes as to put pleasure in a geometric theorem or in a principle in science on a par with pleasure in a work of art.

Mendelssohn's explanation of the distinction between beauty and truth or perfection did not mean, as can be seen later, that he dis-

missed the use of the term perfection as applied to art, but it was intended to make clear that a work of art was not truth or perfection in itself, but only with respect to the beholder, and that it did not follow that the greater the truth or logical perfection of the object, the greater was the proportion of pleasure realized. It was probably for this reason that he ignores Sulzer's explanation of sensation, which implied just such a proportion between excitement from without and pleasure within. An object of art might contain what in themselves are imperfections. The true test of art was not therefore in the perfection of the object but in the effect realized in the beholder, so that the aim of the artist cannot be a merely logical or intellectual truth but an appeal to a deeper impulse in human nature.

Our attitude towards tragedy on the stage makes it clear that there is pleasure in beholding what is in itself unpleasant. Like Dubos and Burke, he is opposed to the theory that the consciousness of a counterfeit or an illusion in art makes it possible for us to enjoy a picture of a shipwreck or a tragedy on the stage. He is rather of the opinion, which as we know from a later passage was cleared up for him by Burke, that such a pleasure is positive in character and must be so accounted for. His conclusions are most interesting and of influence upon later writers.

His first conclusion is arrived at in connection with the discussion of suicide on the stage, which was continued in his later essays. This discussion made clear that just as truth is distinct from pleasure, so art is not itself life. Everything within a picture or a tragedy has existence only in relation to itself as a work of art and in so far as the whole was aimed to be presented to the senses of those who behold it. From this standpoint the details of a piece of music or of tragedy could be ugly without thereby annulling the beauty of the whole. The blackest crime might be admitted to tragedy, if it served to give a stronger impression of the passion which the whole was aimed to arouse. Suicide therefore which would be condemned in actual life, serves its end on the stage, provided that care be taken to treat morality in the drama so that the audience may not draw conclusions which have not the same application to the morality of actual life. That the stage has its own morality, that art has its own laws, its own totality, was one step he took in aesthetic theory and which came to the front in the theories of Schiller. This view of a work

of art as a totality was carried further by Mendelssohn than by Shaftesbury.

As a rule Mendelssohn insisted strongly on the artificial character of art, that it is after all only an imitation; the artist therefore cannot count on securing except for brief and unguarded moments the effect of a real illusion. He differs from Lessing and particularly Diderot in their efforts in the direction of perfect illusion. His own position in this matter is proved to his satisfaction in the fact that one who never attended the theatre is bored with a play so long as he looks only for an illusion. The same argument he holds to be true with regard to sculpture and answers the question as to whether a statue should be painted or not. Art being unable to produce an extended illusion, he makes it a principle that it shall not attempt to attain it, although he favors any effort in the direction of making the illusion or imitation as powerful as possible, allowing full license in the matter of details.

So much for the work of art as such. Mendelssohn considered the subject from the standpoint of the emotions themselves. His argument takes into account the theory of Dubos. In the closing pages of this essay he raises objections to Dubos' statement of the case that the soul longs to be moved, even though it be moved by what is in itself unpleasant, agreeing at this time rather with Maupertuis, as he states later, that an "agreeable idea or perception is one we would rather have than not have." "Pleasure like the will," Mendelssohn thinks, "must have a real or an apparent good as a motive force. . . . According to Dubos' hypothesis we would necessarily have pleasure in horror, remorse or terror because the soul is moved by these things; experience proves the contrary." But in the opening pages of the *Rhapsodie*^{11a} Mendelssohn states, "I was wrong in criticising Dubos for saying that the soul longs to be moved, even when moved by the perception of what is unpleasant. This is in the strictest sense true, since the emotion which is produced within the soul by reason of the perception of what is unpleasant may with respect to the object treated (Vorwurf) be none other than pleasant." In other words he accepts Dubos by introducing a principle not found in Dubos. There is a pleasure in beholding what is unpleasant, but not merely because the soul is thereby moved, but

^{11a} *Rhapsodie über die Empfindungen.*

by reason of other emotions positive in character appearing simultaneously with the perception of what is disagreeable. That is to say, the mind works positively.

Mendelssohn admits, in a later essay, that it was Burke's work on the *Sublime* which brought him to see clearly, as he may not have before, the actual nature of what he calls the mixed emotions (*vermischte Empfindungen*). In this passage he regrets Burke's lack of familiarity with Wolffian philosophy but nevertheless admires him for the close relationship which he maintained between reason and experience, which he thought made him superior to Dubos. It is clear then that Burke is responsible for the explanation which he had for our pleasure in seeing what is unpleasant in art. Weeping, he now demonstrates, is a mixed emotion involving what is pleasant and what is unpleasant, a sensuous perception which involves a perfection and an imperfection. Laughter similarly is a mixed emotion, differing from weeping only in so far as it touches us less vitally.

This theory leads to an interesting application with respect to the Aristotelian pity and fear. In the "Briefe über die Empfindungen" Mendelssohn objected to Dubos' analogy between the pleasure in tragedy and the pleasure in witnessing a bull fight or a gladiatorial combat. Mendelssohn held rather that in the case of the former the poet aims to secure a feeling of pity for the hero, while in the latter case one must first conquer extreme pity as a condition of enjoyment. In the *Rhapsodie* Mendelssohn allows himself a somewhat similar analogy between art and life, namely the pleasure secured in viewing the Lisbon earthquake. In this instance he finds that the pleasure is positive to the extent that while the beholder would have done all in his power to have prevented the catastrophe, he nevertheless has a sense of pleasure in viewing its results, his pleasure being again a mixed one. The interpretation which he gives to tragic pity and fear is that the displeasure we have in witnessing the tragic experiences of the hero is offset by the love we have for the hero and the desire for his perfection. Lessing's views on this subject in the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* show the extent of Mendelssohn's influence on him.

With this view of the mixed emotions and its relation to perfection and imperfection, we come upon Mendelssohn's theory of the moral value of art, which is developed even more fully in the next essay, "Ueber die Grundsätze der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften" (1757). He accepts from Leibnizian philosophy the single

faculty of the human soul which is evidenced in its impulse towards perfection. Pleasure in art can be explained then only as it harmonizes with this leading principle. The pleasure in tragedy aside from its being a perfect totality comes from the fact that in the midst of the sufferings of the hero we form in our own minds an ideal of his perfection. Even in the perception of imperfections the soul is aroused to its original impulse towards perfection. Art then either presents perfection or raises the idea of perfection in our souls. In the *Rhapsodie* he states: "We are now long past that gloomy morality which condemns all the delights in things and prescribes duties for which the creator has not adapted us. We are destined not only to better our powers of intellect and will, but our emotions as well, through sense perception, and thereby raise the dark impulses of the soul to a higher perfection."¹²

Mendelssohn has some interesting remarks with regard to the principle of the imitation of nature. With regard to Batteux he offers the just criticism that he fails to allow for a pleasure in nature itself. He admits that there is a certain pleasure in seeing a good imitation of nature and makes an important point in noting that there is a pleasure experienced in perceiving the greatness of the artist reflected in his work, in seeing how the "perfection of the powers of his soul have united to produce a masterpiece," an idea that is worked out in greater detail in his essay "Ueber das Erhabene, etc."

It is noteworthy that there is nothing to indicate that Mendelssohn's conception of art contemplated a change with regard to what had been accepted as the true standard of beauty, namely Greek art. The innovation in his theory does not affect the objects of art at all, but represents merely a new manner of explaining the pleasure we get from these objects. Accordingly the theory which Mendelssohn offers with regard to the relation of art to nature, represents nothing but the classical conception of typical art. The individual objects of the artist's "imitation" are closer to the ideal beauty of nature than nature itself. To imitate beautiful nature, he holds, is to "copy a certain object as God would have created it, *had sensuous beauty been his highest aim and there had been no important reason for varying it.*"¹³

¹² Contrast this with Sulzer's rationalistic viewpoint above.

¹³ Mendelssohn expresses a similar idea in his discussions with Lessing and Nicolai with regard to the Laokoon.

Nature being below the standard of art he sees, with Winckelmann, the value of the study of Greek works, in other words, the old theory of the imitation of the ancients comes here to light again. With such a viewpoint Mendelssohn had little that was new to offer with regard to such formal principles as unity, order, simplicity, etc., which were made to conform to his general theory of art as a perfect representation to the senses. But these were theories relative to sculpture. When one thinks of the fact that he considered the ideal of modern times as Carl Grandison! and the increased importance accorded the emotions, we are inclined to believe that Mendelssohn followed the same course pursued by Lessing, namely that for sculpture he retained the refined simplicity of the Greeks, but in poetry he welcomed a larger display of the emotions and would probably have welcomed, quite in the manner of Diderot in France, a definite place for moral improvement.

Mendelssohn was aware that there was a basis for the distinction of arts by taking into account the nature of the signs used, i.e., colors, words, figures, etc., and he furnishes an important link in the development which led up to Lessing's *Laokoon* and Herder's *Wäldchen*. The signs of poetry he consistently held to be arbitrary, those of painting and the arts in general natural. He accepts the Baumgarten definition of poetry as sensuous perfect speech, just as he had based his theory of the essential in all arts on artificial sensuous perfect representation. Poetry is made sensuous by the use of sufficient marks or traits to suggest the object itself to the imagination which builds on former experience. Everything may be presented by arbitrary signs if the mind already has a clear notion of the things themselves. The arts which have to confine themselves to the natural signs are therefore more limited than poetry. Each art must accommodate itself to the part allowed it by the nature of its signs. Music cannot depict the rose, nor painting a chord. The eye and the ear only are involved in the beautiful arts. Paintings deal with surfaces, sculpture and architecture with bodies. Mendelssohn was, however, conscious of the limitations which this was putting on the arts and consequently indicated to what extent one art may reach over into the field of another, allowing action in painting and words as natural signs in poetry. Painting was given the liberty of expressing abstract thoughts¹⁴ and to a reasonable extent allegory.¹⁵

¹⁴ Dubos.

¹⁵ Winckelmann.

In the essay on the *Sublime* Mendelssohn lays claim to originality in calling attention to an essential distinction between subject and object. There is a sublime, he holds, in a work of art when we consider the object itself, when we see how more has been indicated than has been given to the senses. The sublime then is an imitation of what is beyond the reach of the senses through a direct appeal to the senses. This awakens admiration. The object alone is able to bring about such a feeling. An example given is Hamlet's soliloquy, "To be or not to be," which is quoted.

But there is another form of sublimity than that awakened by the object. It is an admiration for the work of the artist, a position which has already been indicated in another connection. The admiration for what the artist has done when the object itself has offered little of itself is a form of the sublime. The scene with the flute in Hamlet is an example given among others.

WINCKELMANN

Winckelmann's position in the movement of the time was important particularly from the fact that he tended to concentrate the attention of the public upon the ideal of Greek art. At a time when Mendelssohn and Sulzer were laboring upon the nature of aesthetic pleasure with the aim of arriving at a theory of art, Winckelmann was discussing art without reference to the terminology of the Baumgarten school.¹⁶ In 1755 Winckelmann, at that time 38 years of age, gave out a concise und definite statement of what was to remain almost unchanged his position with regard to the essential character of art. The "Gedanken über die Nachahmungen der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst" had the advantage over the theory of Mendelssohn and Sulzer of dealing concretely with art. It came at a time when the Barock and Rokoko had been dominating forms and when the influence of Shaftesbury and the French school were aiding the gradual wakening of interest in Greek standards. What Winckelmann did was not merely to take a definite stand with regard to ancient art, but to do it so completely, with so much concentration, that his position was at once clear and his influence immediate.

¹⁶ Justi, Winckelmann, seine Werke und seine Zeitgenossen. Winckelmann heard Baumgarten at Halle.

It was an important moment for Germany that Winckelmann secured his ideas of ancient art ultimately from a study of ancient works themselves. In urging therefore a direct and immediate study of Greek art, he was paving the way for a real classicism, to which the misguided efforts of Gottsched and the other adherents of the French would never have attained. What he was attempting to do for art, Lessing later did for drama, holding up Aristotle and Greek dramatists as a true source for the fundamental principles of an art adhered to even by Shakespeare.

Art (and by art Winckelmann meant almost exclusively sculpture) was before anything else a question of eternal beauty, a question of form, an ideal which was not only secured from a study of Greek art, but was reinforced at least by Hogarth's theory of the beautiful line, which appeared in 1753. According to Winckelmann, ideal beauty which was found in Greek works, as nowhere else, was not a detail copy of the human form, but was an ideal arrived at only after the study of many human figures. In fact Winckelmann, as Justi shows, was for a long time convinced that many parts of the human figure, as they appeared in Greek art, were due to a consideration for the beauty of form, and was surprised when later he found in Italy examples of the Grecian nose as well as other details of the Greek figures, which he formerly considered as concessions to the law of beauty. This convinced him that the Greeks stood closer to their models than he had thought, although he never believed the Greeks worked directly from single models.

The sacrifice of details to secure what he terms "sanften Schwung"¹⁷ he calls, in the "Nachahmung," the use of the "probable." By this means the artist was able to secure "a unity of the whole structure, a nobler relation of parts and a richer measure of fullness."¹⁸

In the process of securing ideal beauty, Winckelmann was in search of an absolute ideal. He proceeded with a fixed notion that there was only one beauty, and his history of Greek art shows how lacking he was in any real historic sense. The ideal which he sought was therefore one in which all characteristic features, all personal and individual qualities were absent. Beauty was a form "peculiar neither to this or that person."

¹⁷ 16.

¹⁸ Fülle.

The notion of ideal beauty was thus not in the case of Winckelmann a *nature choisie* of the French school. He was fully aware that the conditions were not such that objects in nature often attained to their full measure of beauty. In certain countries conditions favored the production of beautiful objects, (and by beautiful objects he means the human form), and these were countries where the climate permitted the full development of beautiful bodies. The theory of climate thus took a different turn in Winckelmann than in Dubos with whose work he was familiar. Coupled with the favorable conditions under which the human form was able to develop, was the fact that Greek customs were such that the body itself was exposed constantly to the eye. Hence he urges the superiority of Greek works, since their artists were afforded greater opportunity to get close to the ideal beauty in nature.

His conception of the ideal form went further than this. In the first place religion and heroic legend had joined in imposing upon the artist the necessity of creating forms for which nature itself could by no possibility furnish models. Here it was no longer a question of judgment and taste, but of imagination and inspiration (in the sense of enthusiasm.)¹⁹ The poets were the founders of Greek religion and were responsible for the "exalted conception, which gave wings to the imagination and caused them to raise their works above themselves and the sensuous." With this Winckelmann comes close to the realm of abstract ideas, which he urged with considerable force in the "Nachahmungen," and where in a similar vein he defended the use of allegory. In the attempt to arrive at the expression of what was more than human, namely "das Göttliche," he saw the necessity of proceeding not merely from nature, but from the idea which the artist had himself conceived.

The conception of ideal content, which Winckelmann proposed, apart from ideal form, was an ideal which he found in ancient Greece and which was brought out to a degree in the writings of his favorite philosopher Shaftesbury. Justi²⁰ finds in his attitude of the Greek philosophers towards the emotions the same predominance of the intellectual. The ideal was a repose and happiness secured only when the mind even in suffering was in full mastery of itself. "This subor-

¹⁹ Justi 166.

²⁰ III, 175 ff.

dination of the life of the senses, the emotions, the feelings, this intellectual impassivity and divine peace of soul, this national and philosophical *Ataxie* and *Apathie* hovers on the forehead of their sculptured figures." When therefore Winckelmann seeks for "edle Einfalt und stille Grösse" he is not allowing art a full expression of passion, but he is insisting upon an ideal moment "when the storm is perhaps past and one beholds in calm the full depth of passion." This was his notion when he praised the statue of Laokoon and found that the sculptor had depicted the priest, not as crying out in the intensity of his suffering, but in full mastery of himself. It would follow then that Winckelmann was concerned in the greatness of a soul under suffering. Thus Winckelman had a double ideal in Greek art, an ideal of form and of content, both of which representing a type rather than a particular instance, might well be brought into harmony in art.

Lessing took "expression" in the sense of extreme or individual emotional content, and subordinated it absolutely to the law of formal beauty, whereby it became necessary for an artist to avoid extreme moments of passion. Winckelmann would have agreed to this perfectly. He realized too that extremes of passion distort the line of beauty. "In the state of passion the features of the face and the attitude of the body change and the greater the change the more to the disadvantage of beauty. . . . The soul is great and noble in the state of unity, of repose; although it is more characteristic (*kenntlicher und bezeichneter*) in violent passions."

In its final form the ideal of Winckelmann was a presentation of what in every possible respect was above nature. Everything suggestive of the sensuous, or of the organic body, gave way to what was purely beautiful and within the range of pure ideas. "With such conceptions beauty was raised from the sensuous to what was uncreated, and the hand of artists brought forth creatures which were free from human needs, figures which represented human kind in a higher dignity. . . . They raised themselves into the realm of incorporeal ideas and became creators of pure spirits and heavenly souls, which awaken no sensual desires, but bring about a visualized contemplation of all beauty, for they seem not to be formed out of passions, but only to have assumed these."

This concludes our survey of the aesthetic field so far as it is deemed necessary for this study. Lessing, whose position is naturally one of great importance, has been touched upon in various connections. It will be perhaps sufficient if we make a special study of the relation of Herder to the *Laokoon*, which is the work of chief moment at this time. A discussion of Kant has been omitted since even at this early date Herder sensed the marked alienation of his thought from that of his former teacher, and this breach only grew wider until Herder was emboldened to attempt an extended refutation of Kant's aesthetic viewpoint in his *Kalligone*.

II

By this general survey of the aesthetic movement of the 18th century up to the end of the 60's, a common basis has been established from which to enter upon a more particular examination of Herder's position with regard to this movement. The aim of this study is not to enter upon a complete exposition of Herder's views on the subject of aesthetics, but to investigate particularly the Fourth Wäldchen, which, we think, furnishes documentary evidence of his relation to his predecessors at the time when his views on aesthetics were rounding into completeness.

THE FIRST WÄLDCHEN AND LESSING'S LAOKOON

In the First Wäldchen Herder had undertaken a thorough investigation of the principles laid down by Lessing in the *Laokoon*,¹ (1766). However fundamentally he differed with regard to many details, the fact remains that the First Wäldchen accepts the main position of Lessing that it was possible to distinguish the arts on the basis of their "signs," so that this work represents an effort to arrive at a more accurate solution of this principle. This is particularly important because it is a point wherein the Fourth Wäldchen differs essentially from the First. In the later work a division of the arts according to the "signs" is no longer considered final; the idea is promulgated that a scientific theory of aesthetics must take into account the individual sense ultimately affected by each art, this being the original standpoint from which to determine a fundamental division of the arts. The First Wäldchen was concerned mainly with the object; the later position takes into account both the subject and the object—an attempt apparently to bridge the gap between the more objective consideration of art in Winckelmann and in the *Laokoon* and the sensationalist theories of Sulzer, Mendelssohn, etc.

While the First Wäldchen is an aesthetic document of real importance and in some respects more truly representative of Herder's characteristic attitude of mind than the last Wäldchen, it is true that the general method of aesthetic investigation and the specific

¹ W. G. Howard, *Laokoon*, an indispensable work for the study of the subject. 1766.—References to Herder apply to Suphan Ed. 1878.

position relative to the problems of aesthetics had not yet been determined in this earlier work. Our present interest in the First Wäldchen is to witness Herder's effort to readjust the principles laid down by Lessing, which, as already noted, he in a general way accepted.

In the Laokoon Lessing had set about to distinguish the field of painting-sculpture³ from that of poetry. Shorn of its details one of the main conclusions to which he arrives is that plastic art in distinction from poetry is restrained from a free expression of the emotions by the necessity imposed upon it of representing formal beauty, which is its first law. A main difficulty observable in this position is that Lessing does not have a common basis for comparison, but assigns to painting-sculpture the supreme law of beauty of form and to poetry a freedom of emotional expression, i.e. content. This incidentally accounts for the commanding place given to considerations of form in the Laokoon and on the other hand to the emotions in the Hamburgische Dramaturgie.

Lessing's theory of the distinction between poetry from the plastic arts was based upon the "signs," i.e. words, colors, figures, etc., which were their peculiar medium. These signs he felt to be in a degree elemental, so that a consideration of their nature would reveal an inherent difference between poetry and painting-sculpture. He concluded therefore that in as much as the signs of painting-sculpture necessarily existed side by side, or were coexistent, it followed that these arts would confine themselves to the depiction of objects as they would present themselves to the vision, i.e. side by side. Words, on the other hand, as the signs of poetry necessarily appeared in succession and therefore he argued that poetry had to do solely with successions, which he also called actions, so that actions and not the presentation of objects for the vision, was the field of poetry.

Herder at once noted that in making succession the characteristic quality of the signs of poetry and of its subject matter, Lessing had failed to take into account the fact that succession was quite as well applicable to music. Further than this he saw that the signs of poetry were not to the same extent natural with regard to poetry as the signs of "painting" were to painting, and pointed out the essentially arbitrary nature of words which had been particularly insisted

³ Lessing uses the term Malerei—but his viewpoint is almost exclusively that of sculpture.

upon by Mendelssohn. To overcome the first difficulty Herder put all the arts under two categories: those which present themselves to the senses in their entirety such as sculpture and painting, and those which secure their effect only in the progress of presentation such as poetry, music and the dance. For these two categories he used the terms "work" and "energy," respectively, borrowing admittedly from the Englishman Harris.

To overcome the second difficulty he introduced a new terminology. It is to be regretted that Herder here adopted terms taken from the language of metaphysics since it has led men to seek a deeper meaning in these terms than Herder meant they should carry. In place of "succession" and "coexistence" Herder substituted "time" and "space" without intending that they should have a different general significance than the Lessing terms. As a term properly fitting the nature of words he added "Kraft" or power. Just as words had value not primarily as sounds but by reason of the inner meaning or force behind the word, so poetry—continuing the analogy in the spirit of Lessing—should deal with inner forces or genuine actions. The advantage in this position was that it permitted a use of the term action which was far more accurate than in Lessing. Mere succession does not of itself signify action, according to Herder, but requires an actuating cause behind the series of events. We judge of causation in physics by noting a succession of phenomena; in the same way we consider a succession of events as actions only in so far as they are an expression of an energizing principle originating in the human soul.³

If his explanation is confused it may be due to the effort to illustrate his position with regard to the case of the shield of Achilles, the bow of Pindarus and the chariot of Juno. Lessing had brought these forward as instances where Homer had sought to visualize objects for the reader by describing them in the act of making, i.e. in succession or as action. Herder correctly enough points out that Homer's aim was not to produce a picture for the eye, but sensuous

³ "Power is not an object of sense. All that we observe is succession. But when we see one thing invariably succeeded by another we not only connect the one as effect and the other as cause, and view them under that relation, but we frame the idea of *power*, and conclude there is a virtue, an efficacy, a force, in the one thing to originate or produce the other (Hume). 'In the strict sense, power and agency are attributes of mind only' (Reid)" Fleming, *Vocabulary of Philosophy*, p. 379.

impressions of the essential virtue or power associated with these objects. Action in Herder is consistently in terms of personality⁴ so that these objects have little value for Homer in so far as they do not have direct bearing upon the personage for whom they are constructed. The character of the shield for example reflects itself ultimately in the personality of Achilles. It enters into the action as one of the forces and is not to be considered as something having existence only for its pictorial value. From this standpoint Herder's position is now seen to be consistent with a vital conception of action throughout the *Wäldchen*; since the succeeding events which compose such action bear a causal relation to an originating power (*Kraft*) within the mind of the individual, they are therefore a sensuous representation of his personality.

Action is in fact the critical word in the First *Wäldchen*. Where Lessing had sought to limit it to certain arts, Herder seeks to restore it to its own. Action is the "poetic" element *par excellence*, and he demands for sculpture and painting as well as large a use of the poetic element (which in this essay is at all time synonymous with action) as possible. When for example Lessing attempted to draw general conclusions with regard to the fact that certain Greek heroes and divinities wept by reason of physical pain, Herder sees in this an individual act and a sign of cowardice. Far from being able to talk in general terms with regard to the Homeric heroes, as Lessing had done, he states "jeder ist *eine eigne* Menschenseele, die sich in keinem andern äussert."⁵ Not "what men are but what they do"⁶ is the point of interest, and in what they do we characterize them as individuals. Hence instead of accepting with Lessing that the gods are abstract personalities he considers them as definite individualities from whom our abstract conceptions of their general character have been later deduced.

While Herder accepted in a general way the point of view of Winckelmann and Lessing that beauty of form was the supreme law of sculpture and agrees even more particularly with Winckelmann that a certain repose and exaltation of soul arises from viewing

⁴ The conception of personality in Herder has been clearly worked out by Professor Martin Schütze, Herder Seminar Lectures, U. of Chicago.

⁵ III, 19.

⁶ III, 88.

idealized Greek sculpture, he seeks at all times a greater amount of action. In view of a change of position in later essays, it is significant that he speaks deprecatingly here of the depiction of the single figure because it forces upon the sculptor the necessity of holding to a certain typical conception of character in order to insure its identity. Against the depiction of the single figure he favors the group since this makes possible the expression of a "higher beauty," i.e., the expression of action and thereby individuality. "In every single figure, and so in the works of the sculptors who create single figures, it is the fault (Mangel), the limitations and not the essential character of their art, that it depicts its personages in a characteristic (here in sense of typical) manner rather than as individuals." "The entire mythology is in reality a land of poetic ideas; even when the artist depicts them, he is a poet."⁷

One does not need to be reminded that in a general way what Herder had to say with regard to poetry and the depiction of actions in poetry would have been subscribed to by Lessing. Where Lessing attempted however to keep the fields of poetry distinct from that of painting-sculpture, Herder reverses the process and by insisting upon a generous depiction of action, which as we have seen he calls the poetic element, he re-establishes the rapprochement of the two arts. Because it could express action, painting, which was practically ignored by Lessing, was given a large place. "It (painting) has a drama of figures; they are so arranged as to represent action. . . . The painter in the treatment of a poetic subject is a poet. . . . *In reality one law and one freedom.*"⁸ This position is consistently adhered to by Herder who discusses paintings solely on the basis of the story told and its emotional content. In this he is strikingly in harmony with the position of both Dubos and Diderot, both of whom were wont to discuss painting from the standpoint of the story depicted. The large position given to the emotional content in all art shows to what extent Herder was justified in introducing within the *Wäldchen* a theory of elegiac poetry wherein the universal character of the emotional nature and the conditions most favorable to emotional expression are discussed at length.

It remains to note that after having broken through the boundaries between painting and poetry, by giving action the first place in

⁷ III, 90.

⁸ III, 93 f.

all art, he completes the work by restoring to poetry the right to descriptions. In opposition to Lessing he states that complete visualization is not necessarily the purpose of poetic description, and that on the other hand visualization is perfectly possible where the objects themselves or the means of depicting them are sufficiently familiar to require only the mention of a few traits for the mind to secure a fairly complete picture of the object described.⁹ From this one may conclude that the arbitrary character of the signs of poetry free it from the limitations naturally imposed upon it by Lessing.

In spite of the fact that by giving a larger scope to action and by defending descriptive poetry, Herder has apparently restored the confusion against which Lessing wrote the *Laokoon*, it may be recalled that Lessing had not intended to offer merely a theory, but was opposing an actual condition obtaining in poetry and art. He acted therefore no doubt with discretion in holding to the fundamental principles and would, as is generally believed, have qualified his statements in the continuation of the discussion which he had planned. It may also not be lost sight of that Herder actually accepted the main principles in this *Anti-Laokoon*, his demonstrations however indicating to what extent he had attached himself to a new mode of thought which was hostile to many forms of rationalism. And the fact remains that the form of the *Laokoon*, its clean-cut distinctions etc., gave Lessing a following to which the *First Wäldchen* never attained. It may be safely said that Lessing's *Laokoon* was definitely responsible for the general tendency in Herder's aesthetic views, the *Laokoon* furnishing the means for Herder to criticize and analyze only to develop along lines peculiar to his type of thought.

The *Second* and *Third Wäldchen* followed close upon the *First*, but since they were not concerned with the immediate problem of aesthetics, but were mostly in the form of polemics against Klotz, they furnished no occasion for an expression of view with regard to the question of present interest. The moment these were in the hands of the publisher he turned to a consideration of a possible *Fourth Wäldchen*. This was about the first of December, 1768.

⁹ Cf. Mendelssohn above, p. 62.

THE FOURTH WÄLDCHEN

The direct occasion for this particular essay is to be seen in part in the quarrel which centered about the person of Klotz, whose chief claim to fame seems to have been his dispute with Lessing. Riedel as a member of the Klotzian party had been involved both in the recent surreptitious acquisition from the printer of advanced copy of the revised *Fragmente* and the fairly acrid criticism of them which followed in Klotz's literary organ, so that Herder's feeling of antagonism had been roused to a high pitch. The Second and Third Wäldchen had left little doubt with regard to his attitude toward Klotz in particular, but the matter had become somewhat involved by the fact that his own criticism of Lessing in the First Wäldchen had seemed to indicate a split in the forces of the Anti-Klotzians, which we know from Herder's correspondence was a matter of no little solicitude. No better opportunity could have been afforded Herder than Riedel's comparatively recent work on aesthetics¹ not only to make his position clear as regards his opponents but to come to the defense of the main position of his own friends. The importance of this alignment into opposing camps is fully indicated in Herder's correspondence, wherein it is seen that he puts himself definitely on the side of Nicolai, Mendelssohn, Lessing, etc.

Riedel's work was in no sense original, being in fact as the title indicates, an assembling of theories particularly from German and English writers. The basis for his discussion was the Anti-Wolffian philosophy which seems to have attached itself to the theories of Hutcheson. This work must however not be underestimated since, as Haym suggests,² it tended to replace the "shallow Batteux with the newest ideas of Home, Burke, Mendelssohn, Sulzer, Hagedorn and Winckelmann and was an eclectic treatment of everything from Dubos down to Herder and Lessing." In seeking to establish a true theory of aesthetics over against the theory of Riedel, Herder was in turn compelled to examine previous theory, but in so doing he at-

¹ *Theorie der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften*. Ein Auszug aus den Werken verschiedener Schriftsteller. Jena 1767.

² I, 249.

tempts, as may be seen in the following pages, to retain what he considers to be the standpoint of German philosophy. Aside from giving an insight into Herder's conception of Leibnitz-Wolffian philosophy the work has particular value in offering authoritative evidence of Herder's attitude towards the theories of his predecessors in the field of aesthetics.

One of the original aims of the Fourth Wäldchen was to define the nature of aesthetics and to demonstrate the method by which to arrive at a complete system. Herder hoped by making this clear to further the ends of aesthetic study in Germany, putting the entire subject on a thoroughly scientific and philosophic basis. Not losing sight of the fact that Herder may have taken this general position to motivate certain theories of his own, it remains true, particularly in view of Riedel's work, that there was need at the time for some one to define with some precision the true nature of aesthetic investigation and theory.

At the time Herder was at work upon his essay Sulzer's plans for the publication of the first part of his "Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste und Wissenschaften" were reported to be fast nearing completion. Herder seems not to have called into question Sulzer's own notion with regard to the real nature of aesthetics, nor the proper method of arriving at a "general theory"; his main contention is that the proposed work of Sulzer, valuable as it might be of itself, could not in the form of a dictionary lay claim to being a theory of aesthetics. The road was still open to carry out the end he proposed. "Perhaps should I convince Sulzer of my point of view (i.e., the incompatibility of the form of a dictionary with a general theory of aesthetics) my opinion will come too late to take from his hands the Penelope work before he has unwoven it again."⁸

The Fourth Wäldchen and the correspondence bear repeated witness to the impatience with which Herder seems to have looked forward to the appearance of Sulzer's proposed work. As a member of the Academy at Berlin and as the author of important articles in philosophy, ethics and aesthetics, as well as in the field of natural science, Sulzer had attained a position of commanding importance. This accounts to a degree for the marked tendency in Herder to avoid anything but a most discrete criticism of Sulzer, particularly

⁸ IV, 146.

in anticipation of a work which had as many possibilities as this "dictionary." In any case he seems awed by the fact that behind such a work was necessarily the examination of a vast amount of data, and this we know was one of the chief demands which Herder made for any theory. "And I read" he states towards the end of the second part of the *Wäldchen*⁴ "that Sulzer's dictionary is about to appear;⁵ even as a dictionary this will be an agreeable sight and perhaps the last preparatory contribution to the theory which I wish and seek for. My own critical *Wäldchen* (plural), the care which I have shown in the development of the ideas of beauty which others like so much to confuse—these bear witness as to whether I shall deserve to be one of its readers."

It seemed advisable to make these preliminary remarks with regard to Herder's position in order to make clear one of the original purposes which prompted Herder to write this work.

(a) PART ONE OF THE FOURTH WÄLDCHEN

The first part of the *Wäldchen* is concerned chiefly with the effort to establish a general philosophic basis for a study of aesthetics. It is on the one hand an attack upon the "new philosophy" of which Riedel was representative and on the other a reassertion of the rights of reason inherent in the Wolffian method. It represents an effort to hold firmly to a Leibnitzian standpoint and at the same time bring forward a theory of knowledge which shows to what extent he was a follower of Locke. In the realm of aesthetics it was a definite alliance with the Baumgarten-Sulzer-Mendelssohn school over against that of Hutcheson-Riedel.

1. Riedel as a representative of the "new philosophy" held that there was within the mind an intuitive sense which passed immediate judgment upon the question of beauty, just as there was an intuitive sense for truth and for moral right and wrong. These three faculties he considered to be taste, conscience and common sense. It was one of the legacies of Hutcheson.⁶

⁴ IV, 168 f.

⁵ In the original draft Herder had incorrectly stated "was ready for the press." Cf. IV, 168 footnote.

⁶ IV, 5, note 1. "Man sieht die sogenannten Grundkräfte einer neuern (zuerst: der Crusisch-Darjesisch-Hutchesonschen) Philosophie.

f In direct contradiction to this view Herder maintained there was only one original faculty of the human soul, so that what appeared to be immediate perceptions of beauty, truth, moral right, are not intuitive, but represent the normal activity of the mind trained by experience to pass immediate judgment. The only immediate cognition in the sense in which Riedel meant it was the original feeling that "I am, I feel" and that there is something outside of me. Otherwise he held that impressions from without would remain isolated impressions except for the fact that an active faculty within the human mind definitely relates and connects the impressions. "To feel through the perceptive faculty of my organs that there is something outside of me was sensation; the least discrimination was judgment; the first distinct discrimination in what was at first judgment, is a double-reflection of the activity of the soul, and therefore an act of the reason."

✓ This position was further emphasized by a consideration of the origin of ideas of impenetrability, color, figure, etc., which are not acquired by a single "feeling," but by many single sensations, i.e. by comparison, by judgment. Our conceptions of size, distance, breadth seem to be perception, immediate "sensation," but are as a matter of fact acquired. And if this be true of such ideas as size, distance etc., how much more is this the case with beauty, goodness, truth. It is of course the familiar reasoning with regard to the "primary" and "secondary" qualities of reality. In place therefore of three fundamental faculties there is only one activity of the human soul acting upon experience.

The chapter ends in this manner: "The mind unconsciously takes on at once a dark and sober expression when, after viewing psychology in the simplicity and neatness and exact precision in which the followers of Leibnitz had formulated it and in which Mendelssohn and Sulzer have cleared up so many paradoxes⁷ in the field of dark and confused ideas, it must wander into the Crusius-Riedel labyrinth, etc."

2. Riedel's assumption of an immediate sense of beauty, goodness and truth leads Herder to a further analysis of the inherent weakness in this position "which is destructive at once of all philosophy." That the "philosophy"⁸ he had immediately in mind was the Leib-

⁷ The use of the term paradox has no doubt direct reference to Sulzer's essay: *Erklärung eines psychologischen paradoxen Satzes*, etc. 1759.

⁸ "Philosophie" may at times be more accurately translated by the word "science."

nitizian is clear from what follows. Philosophy he considers to have this essential aim: "It seeks to bring out the ideas already in us, to make distinct the truths which we only knew 'darkly' . . . To do this judgments and conclusions are necessary: judgments which begin with the comparison of two ideas and continue in the development of conclusions until the relation of the two is evident." This is a restatement of the view of Leibnitz that the soul life consists not in securing new material from without but in the development from confused ideas which make up the soul life from the first to distinct ideas which is the ultimate goal. Consistently with this point of view he speaks of a certain educative value in philosophy, although he departs from this standpoint later in the work. "Here lies the real nature and the formative power of philosophy, that through it I see truths at least in an evidence, in a certainty, which I either did not see before, or at any rate did not see distinctly: that through it *I make judgments of taste with a certainty, and distinguish beauties in a light in which they formerly did not appear to me. . .*"

In spite of the weaknesses of the Wolffian system, it had the merit of recognizing the function of the reason without which no philosophy may proceed, reason being here considered by Herder only in the sense of a means at man's disposal for arriving at clear ideas in philosophy and science and not as an adjunct with regard to our judgment in matters of beauty. In line with this position he considers that the beauty of the Baumgarten system lay in the fact that aesthetics was treated from the standpoint of psychology, in accordance with which mental experiences with respect to works of art were the subject of investigation, i.e. a study of the sensations of beauty. Baumgarten represents in other words the empirical method which begins with the experiences of the human soul and works up to a complete system. Herder concludes that "a commentary of Baumgarten would be a book of the human soul, a plan for education and the gate to an encyclopedia of arts and letters."

3. In opposition to Riedel Herder defends the methods of Aristotle, Home and Baumgarten. "The sensation of beauty is the object of investigation whether you search for it in the work of art (Aristotle) or in the mind (Home) and the result arrived at will take the form of definition (Baumgarten)." Riedel's difficulty with regard to Aristotle is in mistaking scientific observations to be mere rules for the creation of art. Herder is very well aware that great geniuses

do not proceed from "clear" ideas with regard to the laws of beauty. But whether Sophocles was conscious or not of the laws which Aristotle found in his dramas, the whole of Aristotle is there. "Because it is impossible for dissected animals to increase, shall the anatomist for that reason cease to dissect?"⁹ Riedel's objection to Baumgarten that beauty is treated in the same manner as truth represents a similar misunderstanding. Herder does not need to be told that "beauty is an *αἰσθητόν* which is more felt than taught." But beauty as a sensation, and the sensation of beauty as an object of investigation are two different things. Beauty, he admits, is inexpressible "im Augenblicke des verworrenen süßen Gefühls, der sanften Betäubung. . . ." but there is nothing to hinder our making this momentary impression the subject of analysis. The immediate perception of beauty is a question of "confused ideas" but aesthetics as such has for its end truth or "distinct ideas." Home like Baumgarten was representative of no one method but had a true conception of aesthetics which united all three methods.

4. Herder makes it clear at this point that Baumgarten had two distinct conceptions of aesthetics one of which was completely untenable. While he was correct in viewing aesthetics as a science, it had not of itself anything to do with what Baumgarten was pleased to call the "art of beautiful thinking" (die Kunst schön zu denken). i.e. poetry. Baumgarten's pupil Meier followed the incorrect notion of aesthetics which is here indicated and consequently Herder uses him rather than Baumgarten as the object of his more violent criticism towards the end of the section. It is important to note in this connection that the educative value of aesthetics is here denied, since he holds that it can do no more towards training the "lower faculties" than logic the "upper faculties" of the mind.

5. The question of taste is next taken up for consideration. The discussion is founded on the principle that "we are all capable of perceiving beauty in so far as we are all capable of sensuous perceptions (sinnliche Vorstellungen.)" The germs of this are to be seen in the acceptance of Baumgarten's definition of beauty as "sensuous perfection"; the argument however is reminiscent of Leibnitz. "In accordance with the measure of its powers, the human soul within the sphere of its existence has formed a number of organs to perceive that

⁹ IV, 19.

which is about it, to receive it into itself for its own enjoyment. The number of these organs . . . show to what extent man is a sensuous creature."¹⁰ A point of variation between men is therefore located in an original variation of powers within the soul. "If no human soul is quite like another so also in its nature there is an infinite variety and modification in its powers, while having the same quantity of reality. As the body forms itself in harmony with the soul, this inner variation evidences itself throughout life, so that in one person one sense predominates over the other, in another this power is greater, etc. This then is equally true of our aesthetic nature where an endless variation of powers is possible."

How closely the Leibnitzian philosophy is involved in this is seen in what follows where Herder attempts to show the genesis and development of the human soul. Here is expressed the idea that from the first the soul has a conception of the universe (*Begriff des Weltalls*) and its development consists in an evolution of powers within as is the case in the visible world of the tree "which the embryo bears within itself and where every leaf is an image of the whole." "In the soul is everything which it feels outside itself.— At every sensation it (the embryo) will be awakened as from a dream to a recollection of its position in the universe. Thus its powers develop through a suffering from without; but the inner activity of development is its end, its inner *dark* pleasure, a constant *perfecting* of itself."

So far reflection has played no part, so that Herder again takes up the question of the origin of ideas within the mind. Repeated sensations from without lead to the conclusion that it is the same sensation and the soul admits a truth outside itself. The mind was not conscious of reflection but such was its origin, and through the habit of receiving the same sensation the mind accepts it as immediate perception. Our notions of figure, form, size and distance represent the same active participation of the mind although all the mechanical processes may be forgotten and only effects are left. The ordering of the materials of thought continues. The time comes when things are considered in relation to ourselves, and the notion of good arises; ideas of order, of harmony, of perfection follow and since beauty is only sensuous perfection¹¹ also the idea of beauty. The point here

¹⁰ IV, 28.

¹¹ Baumgarten.

emphasized is that in the process of securing ideas the soul actually exerts its active capacity of thought with relation to experience, although this activity of the mind may not be apparent and we have the impression of immediate sensations or perceptions. In fact, for practical purposes he sees no reason why they should not be so considered.

A new point is now brought in. Sulzer had noted the effect of early impressions upon the mind and on this basis had shown that through a sort of association of ideas our later judgments are affected. The importance of this position is that a basis for a variation in judgments, in taste, is located in environment, while above the emphasis was on original variations in soul faculties. With direct reference to Sulzer Herder develops the following: "Our childhood is a dark dream of 'Vorstellungen,' but in this dark dream the soul works with all its powers. What it seizes upon it incorporates into the innermost part of its being; it gradually awakens from its sleep. . . . These dark ideas (recollections of childhood) lie in us by the thousands: they form the unusual, the peculiar, and the strange in our conceptions and forms of beauty and pleasure: they often cause us to feel a sense of repulsion or attraction without our knowing it or wishing it: they arise in us as latent impulses to suddenly love this person or hate that one . . . they are the dark grounds in us which change and shade the images and colors which come to us later. Sulzer has explained a few paradoxes in this depth of the human mind; perhaps with these remarks I am throwing in a few rays, which may awaken another psychologist to bring in more light."

The chapter ends with a statement in regard to taste. "When our soul has practised so long in passing judgment upon the perfection and imperfection in things, when judgment has become as ready, evident, active as a sensation, then taste is there, 'an habitual faculty of judging the sensuous perfection and imperfection of things, as if one perceived them immediately.' "

6. Herder's objections to the acceptance of Riedel's innate taste was that it did away with the universal character of beauty and took from it all objective rules, so that taste would differ as individuals differed. To say that beauty was perceived through the senses (and he ridicules Riedel for attempting to demonstrate this to Mendelssohn) and on the other hand to say that we have an innate

sense of what is beautiful is to be self-contradictory, and that is the crux of the difficulty. "Is the feeling of beauty innate? Yes, but only as aesthetic nature, which has the faculty and the organs to perceive sensuous perfection and which has its pleasure in developing these faculties and using these organs to enrich itself with ideas of this kind. Everything is in him, but only in embryo for development, . . . everything comes from a single faculty of the soul, the securing of perceptions (*sich Vorstellungen zu fühlen*) and by this means to secure its pleasure. How beautiful the human soul becomes! Unity at the basis, thousand fold variety in its development, perfection in the sum of the whole. None of these three fundamental faculties is ready made by nature, but everything is formed from one, to be raised up to the most manifold perfection."¹²

Common sense, conscience, taste are then not innate faculties but represent an acquired facility in judgment. The "common sense" of the Greenlander and the Hottentot is not *our* common sense, but is proportionate to their training and their world. It is possible for whole departments of our soul to remain empty and for whole faculties to remain latent, if they are not awakened. Our common sense knows no truths it has not learned, not one truth it has not had opportunity to acquire. "I find a constantly active force within me to have knowledge, and where this has been able to work, where it has had opportunity to have perceptions, form judgments and draw conclusions, this common sense will be found to exist. . . . I see no inner, immediate, universal, infallible teacher of truth; I see a facility in the use of our cognitive faculties dependent upon the measure of this development."

In a similar way Herder takes up the question of conscience with relation to what is morally good or bad; but nowhere does he find judgment more apparent than in the question of beauty, i.e. taste. "If taste is nothing but judgment with regard to certain classes of objects, then it is originally formed as a judgment; it will be lacking in those things completely where this judgment could not be formed; it will err completely in those things where this judgment was falsely formed; it is coarse or weak, strong or delicate, according to that upon which we have secured our judgment. It is not a fundamental faculty, a universal power of the soul; it is an habitual application of our judgment to objects of beauty."

¹² IV, 34.

Herder now shows the possibility for a variation in our senses themselves due to the varying opportunity which may exist for them in the environment in which the individual develops. "A spirit thus formed for music can be a very different creature from the genius who has been formed for the plastic arts in the same degree that the former was for tonal art: the one is purely eye, the other ear; the one to see beauty, the other to hear it." These men would have very different ideas of beauty. But from the variation of taste in such cases one may not conclude there are not uniform laws of grace and beauty. The variation lies in the sense and accordingly Herder points out the possibility of valuable conclusions should the one whose ear or eye has been thus trained have sufficient of the scientific (philosophisch) spirit to analyze his own sense, and Herder suggests the examination of "men who by nature have been born for one art or another."

The variation of taste due to geographical location does not change the principle above stated. That true taste does not vary is proved for him by the fact that wheresoever born men "will always find the song of the nightingale and the simple charms of nature beautiful." Where a variation of taste exists one may arrive at what is true taste by attempting to account for the variation. In other words, to explain the variation, is to confirm the rule. "Nations, centuries, times and men do not all attain a similar degree of aesthetic culture and this puts its seal on the variation of taste." Here follows a two-page quotation from Diderot which had been written to show that only in past ages are *moeurs* to be found which are truly poetic. Herder uses the passage for a different end. He concludes that "Greek, Gothic, Moorish taste in architecture and sculpture, in mythology and poetry, were not the same, and may be explained only on the basis of times, customs, peoples, etc. There is only one principle of taste, but the understanding and application of it varies. Does not this Proteus of taste which changes in all climes, in every change of atmosphere which it inhales, does it not prove in the very reason for its change that beauty is one, just as perfection is one and truth is one?" "There is an ideal for every art for all kinds of poetry and for taste in general and it is to be found in peoples, in times, subjects and works."

With this section Herder abandons the general theme and takes up in the following chapters those particular theories which are more specific and more original.

(b) PART TWO OF THE FOURTH WÄLDCHEN

The second part of the *Wäldchen* is immediately concerned with a theory of aesthetics that takes into account an essential distinction in the senses themselves.

1. Herder points out first of all that the terminology of beauty had been determined largely from objects of sight and applied metaphorically to the objects of the hearing and imagination. The development of "schön" from "schauen" seemed to him to exemplify this! The reason lay in the fact that objects of sight were of such a nature that they could be coolly examined and hence a terminology based on sight was the natural result. He advises therefore a thorough study of the objects of sight since "such a theory would teach us to see beauty before we apply it to reflected objects of the imagination, and before we speak of it as the blind man does of a mirror. . . . Here aesthetics awaits its optical Newton."

Expressions applicable to aesthetic pleasure through the medium of the hearing have been limited, but that this need not be so is attested by the richer vocabulary of the Italians with reference to music and by the case of the blind who show themselves capable of much finer nuances of sensation than those who see. In anticipation, therefore, of his own theory he proposes that a philosopher treat such a theory from the standpoint not of harmony but of tone (*Wohllaut*) which he holds to be the elemental consideration. This, he states, would be the "second portal to this aesthetic structure."

Feeling, i.e. touch, is the sense which ought first of all to be examined whereas in the past it had been relegated to a position of no importance under the name of a rude or coarse sense, (*unfeinere Sinne*)¹³ and excluded from the arts of beauty. The very term aesthetics, which "is a philosophy of feeling," shows that it should occupy a commanding position, a statement which shows a confusion with regard to "feeling" which not infrequently occurs.¹⁴

In opposition to what he considered was the general opinion and in particular the view of Mendelssohn, he states that it is not our sense of sight which gives us our conceptions of bodies and forms, but that through this sense we acquire our ideas merely of surfaces, colors and images, and hence the necessity of taking touch into

¹³ This is particularly applicable to Sulzer.

¹⁴ See Haym: Herder.

account where bodies are concerned. As a proof of his statement he gives a synopsis of Diderot's Letter on the Blind, omitting all the metaphysical considerations which were Diderot's chief concern. The case of Chesselden is however discussed with greater detail than in Diderot, his source being here, as we learn from a note to his "Plastik," the Englishman Robert Smith. He notes further the contribution of Rousseau (Emile) who wished to make practical application of this principle to education by bringing about a more specialized development of this "truer" sense. This does not prevent Herder from implying that the application of this principle to aesthetics was original and stating that it "will give it a completely new form. Everything in fact which is beauty of form, corporal beauty, is not a visual, but a tactual (fühlbar) conception; each one of these beauties must be sought for originally in the sense of touch." "Without such a distinction there is the same confusion as when the blind say, 'Now I understand, red is like the sound of a trumpet.'"¹⁵

Taste and smell he excludes from consideration, holding them (as did Sulzer) to be variations of the sense of touch.

2. Herder returns now to the general question of aesthetics which characterized the first Part. He speaks broadly of the necessity of considering the senses separately and points out the essential unity within the human mind for which the organs of sense are as so many streams flowing into an ocean.¹⁶ Once more he strikes at what he considers the prevalent method of the time: "Their definitions begin 'von oben herab,' from beauty and the sublime; they begin with that which should be last, namely, beauty." One should begin with data. It is a question of analysis which is considered the only true philosophic method. He wants above all a physiology of the senses.¹⁶

The chapter ends with a discussion of the confusion in philosophy due to the conventional manner in which words are accepted without due regard to the original sensuous impression which these words were intended to give. A theory of the origin of language is here touched upon.

¹⁵ Sulzer's figure is of a spring as the constant source of many streams, which indicates to what greater extent the contribution of the senses is emphasized in Herder.

¹⁶ Sulzer, we recall, desired the *physics* of the senses, and his theory illustrated this, and here again Herder is seen in advance of Sulzer.

3. The discussion is now taken up where it was interrupted by the generalizations of chapter 2.

This new theory of aesthetics based on the senses does not mean that the theory of Lessing proposed in the *Laokoon* is fully abandoned. The relation of the "parts" of an object is an essential factor in the new position, but the attempt is here made to put the matter on a basis that is more representative of the facts and more inclusive of the entire field of art. In making the division Herder takes into account two things: whether the effect seems to be without as in the case of objects of sight, or more within as in the case of the objects of hearing and feeling, and in the second place as to how far the objects present themselves to the senses essentially in succession or simultaneously. This leads therefore to a threefold division which represents a step in advance of the *First Wäldchen*:

1. Sight: Parts are without and yet coexistent.
2. Hearing: parts within and in succession.
3. Touch: parts within and coexistent.

The first has to do with surfaces, the second with tones and the third with solid bodies; a sense therefore for surfaces, for tones, for bodies, and, when it comes to beauty, for beauty in surfaces, in tones and in bodies. The three arts are painting, music and sculpture. Poetry is excluded from these categories since, as is indicated later, it does not deal with natural signs and borrows from all arts equally.

Sculpture is considered first. The impossibility of treating sculpture from the standpoint of sight is effectively answered by the statement that the mind left to the sense of sight would never secure a conception of solid bodies. It is a question therefore of touch. This permits him to bring into use the theory of Hogarth relative to the line of beauty and to find in the "elliptical line" rather than in color or proportion of parts, the essential beauty of sculpture. To this idea is added the notion that the form of a body bears an organic relation to the soul within.¹⁷ Beauty therefore does not rest with the mere line of beauty, but lies deeper. "To describe a painting one describes what is before him, one shows figures in their relationships; to describe an Apollo, the touch, the imagination takes the place of the colder eye. One feels Hercules in the whole body and

¹⁷ Cf. Herder's early essay on *Schönheit als Bote der Seele*. One sees clearly the influence of Winckelmann throughout this section.

the body in all its actions." In painting totality is in the entire grouping, in the entire situation, wherein each individual is a part only of a larger whole. In sculpture each figure is a totality by itself.

The question now as to whether art shall deal with beautiful bodies is for Herder settled. Where the individual body counts for less and where the effect is in the whole, as in painting, it is not a requirement.¹⁸ In sculpture it is an absolute rule. Here the force of Hogarth's theory is evidenced. "The ugly and disgusting statue which I touch in my thought, and continue to feel in its distortion and its 'Unnatur' is disagreeable. Instead of feeling beauty, I come upon breaks in the body, which cause a cold tremor to pass through my limbs; I feel an unharmonious vibration of my nerves of feeling and an inner disturbance of my nature."

On this theory of touch he disposes of the question as to whether the sculptor shall depict hair on "Myron's Cow" or whether statues should be painted. It gives him the explanation he desires with regard to the characteristic features of Greek art, the nude, the clinging drapery, the beautiful contour. Sculpture must be made with due regard to touch which even in the imagination passes over bodies and reveals the soul within. It must work essentially for this sense and not for the sense of sight. This gives him the standpoint for defending the "*edle Einfalt und selige Ruhe* of Greek art." Here can be nothing ugly, nothing distorted or broken in its main expression, for if the inner feeling or touch stumbles upon some malformations, it is repelled with horror, and both exaggerations and ugly features arising merely from touch, prevent a free and pleasing play of the imagination. "*Selige Ruhe*" is the first condition since this alone gives room for the beauty which eternally pleases the touch and cradles the imagination into gentle dreams.

At the close of the section he states that he "has gathered many other observations and has found important explanations with regard to this art, so that he has not only a new logic for the lover of art, but also a new way for artists by which they may approach the perfection of the ancients, so that it would be most agreeable time spent to gather these observations under the eye of an artist and bring them to scientific perfection."

¹⁸ Mendelssohn's theory of "mixed sensations" practically settled this question.

4. A theory of painting is now developed based solely upon sight, an illustration for which is found in the case of Chessel den mentioned in Diderot's letter. He notes that the blind restored to sight see all objects as a great color picture surface immediately upon the eye. The case is the same with children first learning to see. The sky, woods, etc., are all surfaces. Here Herder finds the first material for painting. It imitates this great tablet of nature with all its images in the small and like nature puts everything upon a single surface. Therefore the representation of things upon a flat surface in accordance with their external appearance or form as they appear in a straight "continuum" with others—this is the primal conception of painting.

Thus then there is a distinction from sculpture. Sculpture imitates things only as substance existing of itself, but never in a "continuum" with others; a sculptor can make shepherdesses but never a shepherd landscape.¹⁹ Painting can depict everything, and this *everything* is its field. It never represents things by themselves, but in the *expansum* of visible things. Shepherds are never painted as shepherds, but as they appear in their shepherd world. The very thing that sculpture cannot do, namely depict the *expansum* of things, is the essence of painting."

In the main therefore no art can take another for a model. Brooks and trees are for example excluded from sculpture. The phenomena of space as such are the subjects of painting; tangible beautiful bodies are the subject for sculpture. Hence it follows that the composition, the arrangement of parts plays an important rôle in painting.

The question of light is an important factor. The difference between painting and etching is that in the latter case light is treated as an unbroken whole, whereas color tends to final perfection, giving a greater element of truth to appearances in space.

Returning to the question of sculpture he finds that a theory of sight enters into the explanation of two phenomena in the realm of art. The first of these was the remarkable skill shown by the Greeks in being able to make figures which close at hand were without form and proportion, but which at a distance fulfill their end as statues. This he felt was the abandoning of one art to make it an illusion for another sense. The second of these theories is a theory of colossal

¹⁹ Neither Winckelmann nor Lessing found place for landscapes, nor were they particularly popular in Dubos and Batteux.

figures in Aegyptian art, which is based directly upon the experience of Chesselden.

5. The digression concerning the colossal figures in Aegyptian art is continued through this chapter. The chapter closes with the expression of the need for a "physical and mathematical optics of beauty," for a "science of beautiful phenomena" such as a Lambert might write. Not only the character of the German language which is adapted to fine analysis, but the fact that there exist already in the works of Winckelmann, Mengs, Hagedorn, etc., splendid contributions to the theory of beauty (beauty however treated merely from the standpoint of sight) convince Herder that the Germans are best able to carry this out.

6. This and the following two chapters deal with the sense of hearing. The aesthetics of hearing is seen to differ from that of sight as the ear differs from the eye, as tone from color, space from time. Beauty for the eye is before us, is colder, more easy to analyze and remains where it may be found again; the pleasure of tonal art is within us; it works as a sort of intoxication; it vanishes and leaves as little trace as a ship in the sea or the arrow in the air. One cannot put this inner feeling outside oneself and separate the indivisible tone as is the case with color; one cannot feel and at the same time think and capture the fleeting moment and fix it for eternity. Such are the difficulties which Herder finds in this subject.

He recognizes the work done by Euler, Dalember, Diderot etc., but indicates that physics and mathematics applied to the question of music can only deal with harmony and with sound as such; it cannot clear up the question of tone which is the fundamental consideration. The number of "beats" cannot tell the quality of a tone which is the elemental consideration.

The objection to a theory based on harmony, is that the ear as ear does not hear relations. Sulzer's theory of the individual moment wherein the pleasure is proportioned to the number of beats which the ear detects, is dismissed by Herder on the grounds that it explains the limits of sensation but does not explain how two instruments producing the same tone occasion different degrees of pleasure, or how two men with different degrees of sensitiveness are differently affected by the same tone.

The explanations offered have failed to distinguish sound from tone. The general questions of strength and weakness, of velocity

etc., may be taken up by the mathematician and the physicist, who may thereby arrive at a theory of sound which strikes the ear, but as the question of a simple tone, analogous to a simple line,²⁰ is no longer a question of mere physics but inner feeling. It is ultimately not a question of acoustics but of a "physics of the soul." As far as physical origin is concerned sound and tone are the same. That the tone is the ultimate basis for differentiation is illustrated in the case of the different effect produced by the same tone played on a violin and on a flute. Sound is therefore a corporeal aggregate of tones, and tones the single powerful moments.

7. It is not a question of high or low tones,²¹ loud or weak,²² but the sensation of the essential character of tone (*Empfindbarkeit der Beschaffenheit*). With this there follows a *physiological* explanation of tone. Just as when singing into a piano causes the vibration of the corresponding string, so we have by analogy an explanation of the varying sensitiveness to tones. We must go beyond the inner structure of the ear which shows by what means sound is prepared for its reception by the nerves, and consider the variation to be found there. "In the variation of the nerve branches of hearing are to be found the essential and specific differences in tones and tone qualities, that is in sounds, in so far as the variation in quality may be the source of pleasant or unpleasant musical tone. Sound, like a body, or its element, the tone, like a line, strikes its string in playing on the hearing; and on whether it does so in this direction or that, homogeneously or not, depends the disagreeable or on the other hand the smooth quality of tone. A tone is disagreeable which causes a vibration in the nerve in opposing directions, so that all the fibers are put into unnatural motion against each other, as if the nerve would break. . . . A tone is considered agreeable when all the fibers of the nerve are affected in a homogeneous and harmonious manner. Obviously there are two degrees of agreeableness. The nerve may be drawn homogeneously, but the fibres suddenly made more tense; or it may be permitted to slacken and a gentle releasing of the fibers occurs. The former corresponds to what we call the sublime and the latter to what we know as beauty."

²⁰ Sulzer made the same analogy. The theory of the line is of course from Hogarth.

²¹ Euler.

²² Sulzer.

That the origin of this theory lay with Burke is left beyond doubt by Herder's own statement. "We have a British empirical philosopher, who has followed these two feelings deep down into our nature and as it were to the very fibres that surround the soul and everywhere has reduced the sublime to a feeling of tension and beauty to a feeling of relaxation of the nerves—it is Burke, the author of the philosophical "Inquiry into Beauty and the Sublime," whom Mendelssohn made known to us and whom Lessing has long promised us (in translation).²³ The objections to Burke are that he did not carry his examination far enough, and Herder points out the road to what he calls the "*Pathetik* of all simple musical accents, which would examine the relation which certain tones and their effect upon the brain would have to certain sensations of the soul; how certain sounds occasion certain states of mind, and how there is after all a material soul whose external points of contact would not completely disappear before investigation."

A historical application of this theory follows wherein an attempt is made to explain primitive music as a pleasure in tones in contrast with the modern interest in harmony. The relation of individual tones to individual passions and ideas is seen in the songs of war, of peace, of anger, etc. Once again the case of the blind is brought forward whose sense for the elements of sound is keener and who feel more in a single tone (*Anton*) than we in the harmony of a whole piece. And what is true of him is true of the ancients.

8. The idea that sound as such is external, but that tone is more in the soul itself, that sound affects the external hearing and tone the internal hearing is more fully developed. The fact that hearing lies closer to the soul is therefore given as a reason for the superiority of hearing over other senses.

There follows then a theory of the history of music. Music he considers not so natural to man as to birds. The first expressions of pain or pleasure in man are inarticulate, but as such are a basis for language. This first rude language was not music in that it lacked a pleasant succession of tones. Song is however the language of birds since that is expressive of the bird itself. They have their language from the first as a kind of instinct, while man only gradually arrives at a language. Music as such did not arrive through an imitation of birds, as some had thought, but was itself an expression

²³ IV, 103.

of passion, of feeling. Thus poetry and music were inseparable sisters. A true relation was seen early in Italy where poems were sung and where melodrama was still melodious poetry. The change came with the introduction of instruments which tended to make language more philosophical and prosaic and led to the introduction of harmony. In this latter art he held that the Germans excel.

9. Dance is now considered as an expression of the passions to the same extent music is. In the man of nature the accents of passion are from the innermost soul. Gestures become a visible language. Language, music and dance all have their rhythms. Dance is seen as the consummation of all the arts. This, rather than painting, he believes deserves the name of "stumme Dichtkunst."

10. Herder summarizes the work thus far as follows: "We have gone through the senses of beauty in order to assign to each its chief art, and through a physiology of the sense to find the means of analyzing the essential character of the respective art; we have considered the arts of beauty themselves in order to note in each case the ideas that are original and peculiar to their nature; we have followed for the most part in beaten paths and have been compelled to show more what ought to be done than what has been done." This has led to an "aesthetics of the feeling of beauty," "a philosophy of the phenomena of beauty" and "an aesthetic science of music." These three roads are necessary to a complete theory of the arts. In psychology much has already been accomplished, but from the standpoint of the objects and "their beautiful sensuousness" without which there can be no theory of all the arts, *he believed little had been done*. As against the method proposed he finds in looking over the field that poetics are based on painting and theories of painting based on poetry; he finds endless discussion of unity and variety, of imitation, etc., etc. wherein each man has an idea of the art about which he writes analogous to a blind man's idea of color. Hence the importance of his own contribution.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a criticism of Riedel. Riedel had accepted the Baumgarten definition of poetry, painting, etc. and had expanded them so as to explain more clearly their meaning and to include the distinctions made by Lessing in his *Laokoon*. Herder attacks these definitions in considerable detail and ends by restoring the brevity of Baumgarten's definition that "poetry is perfect sensuous speech," *oratio sensitiva perfecta*; paint-

ing is "the fine art which depicts surfaces"; sculpture is the "fine art which forms bodies"; music is "the fine art which works through harmonious and melodious tones, or the fine art of tone (*Wohllaut*)"; pantomime is "the fine art of giving living expression to actions."

In the course of the discussion Herder takes up the term sensuous (*sinnlich*, *sensitiva*). "To those who don't know the meaning of the word it will be an algebraic formula, and they will find Batteux more clear. Others who understand it only in a shadowy way will use it incorrectly; and there are many such in Germany. The only proper use will be found in those followers of Wolff who will see the idea in it clearly and distinctly, and only those will see Baumgarten's meaning in its true light." This leaves little doubt that in Herder's mind the approach to aesthetics from the standpoint of the sensuous part of our nature involved in art was in direct opposition to the theory of imitation as preached by the followers of Batteux in Germany. This same position is made clear in the Fragment on Baumgarten.²⁴

11. Herder states with regard to Riedel's work that "as an abstract from the writings of various authors his *Theory* may have value, even if the author should fail to offer a theory of his own." But he is unwilling to concede that he has been successful in making such an abstract and blames him for finding no better explanations of the arts in view of the excellent authorities he used. Herder accordingly reviews some of the leading theories of his predecessors with the apparent purpose of correcting false impressions left by the Riedel work. Incidentally he makes clear his own general position. The men thus taken up include Sulzer, Mendelssohn, Diderot, Home, Gerard. Herder's views on these men are discussed later in this study.²⁵

In view of the fact that Herder had already summarized his position and given a complete theory of art, it is not at first clear why he should do so again at this point. Here we find a reiteration of the statement that a theory of poetry and the fine arts must take into account all the arts to arrive at its main principles; that there are no principles without data and phenomena, and these from the individual arts; that words "von oben herab" are complex "Trugi-

²⁴ XXXII.

²⁵ See below, pp. 97ff.

deen"; that ideas not secured directly from the product cannot be applied to the products: by reason of such views he finds himself in direct opposition to the defenders of the so-called pure aesthetics. "Here are my ideas and general lines for the course which one must pursue through all the arts to arrive at a theory of beauty; the main thing is the course, the method itself (with direct reference to an objection raised with regard to Sulzer's dictionary)."

He begins with architecture, since this gives him the clearest idea of unity and variety, of proportions, symmetry as well as the question of size and the resulting admiration.²⁶ Here is an ideal of visualized perfection (*anschauliche Vollkommenheit*). "From this you take away not only an image, but you arrange your soul accordingly, in order to give it greatness, strength, simplicity, richness, order and fitness; in order to build it like a beautiful building."²⁷ Architecture is the "logic" of beauty.

Architecture has nothing to do with imitation; there is no ideal of beauty, but only a question of perfection in lines, surfaces and bodies, all of which are arbitrary. Only with the statue do we come to the ideal of living beauty. Here is nature, real resemblance, even to touch, which is the surest sense of truth. "Here is beauty, not merely in the imperfect waves and serpentine lines²⁸ which are only on the surface, and a constant source of dispute, but in rotundity, in that which is essential to touch. Here is original expression, the soul speaking through the body, i.e., illusion. Here is insatiable fullness of thought in the action. If one stand before the statue of Lysippus with closed eyes, one may grasp the original force of the word feeling. You will find that in this world of the sensuous-beautiful, touch is the first true sense of experience."

Sculpture has to do with the single figure.²⁹ We now take up what is essentially the group. Variety on a single ground, in a single continuum, in a single position of light and shade. Figures no longer work as individuals, but the impression is of a whole composed of figures, lights, color and space. They all together make a single

²⁶ Burke.

²⁷ The relation of architecture to life recalls immediately Shaftesbury and the English school.

²⁸ Hogarth.

²⁹ We recall how little space was given the single figure in the First *Wäldchen*.

impression. This is painting. The further we proceed, the more artificial art becomes. Here it is not touch, but the practised eye which gathers up the various parts of the pictures. Drawing has a two-fold purpose, namely to establish probability and visual beauty, the latter a matter of waves, lines etc.³⁰ Color comes in to make the illusion perfect. In painting, picturesque illusion; in sculpture tactual illusion: the difference between sight and touch. In the one case the body becomes alive, in the other the pictured surface becomes present to us. Succession is here impossible where everything is intended for a single moment for the eye.

Compared to painting which is the art of visualization music is energy.³¹ Music as such is an imitation of human passions; it arouses a succession of inner sensations which are not visualized, but only extremely "dark." One laments, sighs, rages, rejoices etc., with music, all of which are indefinite emotions. As yet there is not the suggestion of a picture. The next step would be language, but the difficulty here is that language is at once too definite and *arbitrary*, lacking strength on the one hand (as compared to music) and not so closely connected with the emotion to which art is given expression. Therefore the dance is chosen as the next art, since this too is an expression of passion, but in the form of attitudes and motions and actions. Music and the dance, instead of supporting each other are considered together as a complete expression of the soul, a totality. Such was Herder's conception of the dance of the ancients. The other elements of music, such as the beautiful succession of tones and harmony, are mentioned.

Poetry. From all the senses the sensation of beauty enters the imagination and from all the arts they flow therefore into poetry. Imagination is nothing without the senses, and poetry is nothing without the arts. Each art contributes its share to poetry so that there is justification for the picturesque, the plastic and the musical element in poetry. This is an important consideration. Although Herder warns decidedly against a confusion of the arts this does not apply to the relation of poetry to the arts, whereby the main distinction made by Lessing in the *Laokoon* which we have seen was broken down in part by Herder in the *First Wäldchen*, seems here to be practically abandoned.

³⁰ Hogarth.

³¹ See use of these terms in the *Laokoon* and the *First Wäldchen*.

What Herder has here presented he considers to be the essential in a philosophic theory of beauty, which has nothing to do with the practical phases of poetry and art. Such a system he considers has the advantage of being open to the young from the very first, since it is a question not of principles, but of experience, of phenomena which lead finally up to the conception of beauty. This he considered to be the Greek manner of education which did not begin with vague and abstract ideas, but with real ideas of beauty, which developed until the soul was filled with Greek feeling and Greek philosophy. It always remained experience, a training of eye, ear, hand and imagination.

The second part closes with a reference to Sulzer's coming work which he feels will be the last preparation for the theory he desires.

(c) PART THREE OF THE FOURTH WÄLDCHEN

The third part of the Wäldchen is obviously incomplete. It seems to have been Herder's intention at this point to enter into a detailed criticism of Riedel's interpretation of those properties or qualities which have been traditionally associated with the subject of beauty, such as questions of unity and plurality, the sublime, imitation of nature etc. It was his conception that a fallacy had arisen in the past, and particularly in the case of Riedel, in considering these qualities only with respect to a single art, and that a true study of aesthetic problems required that every question of this kind should not only be traced to its source, but that this should be done with equal care in every art concerned, if one were to expect to approach fundamental truth. Throughout the discussions which Herder gives these matters, he remains in the main negative and there is little in the way of good to be gained in following him through this more or less controversial argument.

HERDER'S RELATION TO THE AESTHETIC THEORY OF THE TIME

From the foregoing survey of Herder's *Wäldchen* it is clear that Herder's views on aesthetics bear a close relationship to previous aesthetic theory. It is possible in a very satisfactory degree to determine through this *Wäldchen* the extent of obligation which Herder owed to his predecessors in building up what was in part an eclectic theory, but which led finally into a definite and original channel.

a. BAUMGARTEN

Herder's position with regard to Baumgarten seems fairly clear. We may take it as a straightforward statement of the case when he says "that the Baumgarten psychology had always seemed to him a rich treasure chamber of the human soul and that a commentary upon it would be a book of the human soul, a plan for education and a gateway to an encyclopedia of all the arts and poetry. . . . If one does not take offense at the 'lower soul-faculties' he will be found to be the first philosopher of our times to carry a philosophic and often poetic torch into these regions of the soul." The fragment on Baumgarten written previous to this time,¹ reveals a similar attitude. He notes that there are plenty of books on a logic of the "higher faculties" but "if what is beautiful and good lie just in this "dark ground," then let a Montaigne or a Rousseau, a Locke or a Home come and explain the Baumgarten psychology and fill me full of it."²

This position he now contrasts with that of Batteux and Aristotle with regard to imitation, and upholds the Baumgarten position in that it has to do with a living part of the human soul rather than a dry "Vorwurf." This general view that beauty must be treated as sensuous perfection³ may be taken to represent Herder's standpoint so that the contrast of this position with the imitation theory as championed by Batteux and his followers in Germany is made clear. The entire discussion of Herder ultimately goes back to this question of the senses and concerned itself with the nature of what Baumgarten

¹ See XXII, 184 ff.

² Cf. Letter to Kant 1767, "Welch ein Mann wäre es der über Baumgartens reiche Psychologie mit eines Montaigne's Seelenerfahrung redete. Fourth *Wäldchen* (IV, 15): such a commentary is mentioned also for Montaigne, Klopstock and Leibnitz.

³ IV, 30.

called "sensitiva." In the discussion of Riedel's definitions of poetry, painting etc., we have already seen how fully Herder attempts to uphold the Baumgarten standpoint directly.

To what extent Baumgarten may be taken as an immediate source for Herder's theory is not so easy to determine in view of the fact that there were followers of Baumgarten who developed his main positions, and who were careful not to confuse the character of aesthetics as did Baumgarten. In any case the position of Herder with relation to Baumgarten will need to be kept in general terms, since his own criticism of him shows to what extent he differed in detail. He finds fault with him, for example, for developing a theory of aesthetics from a theory of sight whereby it became a mere metaphor⁴ and so he thinks it would have remained had Baumgarten completed his work. Perhaps it is with reference to this that he holds Riedel up to ridicule for having attempted to demonstrate to Mendelssohn that beauty must take the form of a sensation, "as if Mendelssohn were a second feelingless Baumgarten."⁵ That he considered Baumgarten had anticipated most of Home is stated more than once, and he tends to classify him with Home as proceeding from too little data. But his position with regard to the senses and the general philosophic method were the moments which gave Baumgarten his position in Herder's thought.

b. SULZER

The Fourth Wäldchen would leave little doubt as to the importance which Herder attached to the writings of Sulzer in the field of aesthetics. We know from his correspondence that at the very outset of his work on this Wäldchen he had been reading some of Sulzer's essays and saw in them a refutation of Riedel's theory.⁶ Again in Nantes at the time of the revision of the Wäldchen we learn that he had come upon all the essays of Sulzer which had appeared in German. It remains to be seen what Herder found in these treatises of Sulzer which directly appealed to him and what he saw reason to reject.

In Part II, Chapter 11 of the Wäldchen, devoted to a critique of previous writings on aesthetics which he thought of particular value,⁷

⁴ IV, 53.

⁵ IV, 34.

⁶ To Nicolai. Jan. 10, 1769.

⁷ Part II, chapter 11.

Herder begins with Sulzer and devotes considerably more space to him than to any of the other writers. It was first of all because Herder saw in him the disciple of Wolff and Leibnitz, that he was glad to look upon him as a worthy predecessor and contemporary in the field of aesthetics. The effort to deduce everything from a "simple yet manifold, ever active principle within the human soul" was a consequence of Sulzer's position relative to German philosophy, and it is this fact which prompts Herder to speak of Sulzer's first aesthetic treatise, the "*Theorie der Empfindungen*" as a "small monument in Germany . . . worthy of the hands of a Leibnitz or a Wolff."⁸ This principle struck at the very heart of the Riedel theory which accepted three fundamental faculties, rather than one, within the human soul. Herder is accordingly moved in various places in the *Wäldchen* to pay tribute to the work both of Mendelssohn and Sulzer in proceeding from this principle. Thus he speaks of the "Simplicity and precision and accuracy with which the followers of Leibnitz have treated psychology and in which Mendelssohn and Sulzer have cleared up many paradoxes in the field of dark and confused ideas."⁹ Again: "Sulzer has explained a couple of paradoxes in the depths of the mind: perhaps with these few remarks I may throw in a few rays and awaken another psychologist to bring in more light."¹⁰ The "paradox" alluded to is unquestionably an allusion to the title of Sulzer's essay "*Erklärung eines Paradoxes*, etc."

However much Herder might be pleased to accept in general Sulzer's attitude towards this single faculty of the soul one cannot lose sight of the fact that Sulzer interpreted this in a far more rationalistic manner than did Herder. As compared to Herder, Sulzer still holds to the superiority of purely intellectual ideas, and we have seen to what extent he attempts to subordinate pleasures of the senses and even moral pleasures to the pleasure of the soul in securing a perfect "idea," thus conceiving beauty as a perfection in the object which makes possible a ready grasp of a perfect totality. Herder agrees with him no farther than to accept the general principle of a single faculty of the human soul which may be accounted for in Leibnitzian philosophy.

⁸ IV, 144.

⁹ IV, 12.

¹⁰ IV, 33.

Herder was in perfect accord with Sulzer that taste with respect to art was in reality a rational judgment, however spontaneous this judgment might seem. In other words taste did not require a distinct faculty of the human soul. Both agreed further as to the part which environment played in bringing about a variation in taste both with respect to nations and individuals, in both instances the "Hottentot and Greenlander" is contrasted with civilized man. Both accepted the existence of a standard of taste from which the so-called variations in taste are merely deviations from the normal. This notion with regard to taste was of course very general throughout the 18th century, and Herder's previous studies had brought him into contact with this principle; it is only Herder's method of argumentation at this point that can be called reminiscent of Sulzer. Fundamentally the men differed, Sulzer upholding his one-sided rationalistic position, Herder seeing in the variation of opportunity and environment a source of variation in sense experience and sense training.

Of particular importance to Herder were those portions of Sulzer's "Theorie der Empfindungen" which had to do with the senses. From the discussion of Sulzer's theories already given it will be remembered that he divided pleasures into three classes, the pleasures of the senses being considered to have the least merit. He then offers a theory of sensation which presumes five gradations of nerves according to their capability of receiving fine or coarse impressions, sight being considered to be the finest sense, and touch being placed at the bottom of the list. In the manner of a physicist he seeks to indicate how the quantity of pleasure may be measured, the nerves making possible a certain definite proportion between the object without to the sense perception within. This is followed by a theory of music which follows beaten paths, but which, as in the case of all sensation, is submitted to the original principle that the soul knows only one faculty.

Herder's *Wäldchen* leaves no doubt with regard to his familiarity with every step of Sulzer's reasoning at this point. His own theory of pleasure in music, for example, is offered in direct refutation of Sulzer's position. Sulzer's theory was a "physical and quantitative" explanation, his own was "qualitative and physiological." There is no indication that he objected to Sulzer's theory except that it did not get beyond a certain point, namely to show the manner in which

any sound or noise affected the nerves of the ear; but the reasoning as to when pleasure resulted in such sensations was not accepted by Herder. Further, the fact that Sulzer distinguished the senses, is of course of tremendous importance in view of Herder's position later. Here at least was a valuable suggestion even though Herder must object to the position accorded the sense of touch. It is unquestionably with relation to Sulzer that he states that in the past "we have banished touch under the name of coarse sense."¹¹ In the critique in part II, chapter 11 he sums up this position briefly when he states, that "if I may except his weighing of the sensations, and the explanation for the differentiation of the senses etc., this work, as far as its formal part is concerned, is even in its smallest detail a metaphysical basis for a future aesthetics. I am using the expressions 'formal part' and 'metaphysical basis' advisedly, for Sulzer's little work is not a theory derived from objects of beauty. It indicates only a metaphysical position with regard to the sensation of pleasure; it calculates the agreeable play of the nerves following sensation more from the standpoint of quantity of impression, than quality etc."¹² In spite of Herder's objection to Sulzer's theory one cannot fail to see in Sulzer's work at this point an opportunity so necessary to Herder's type of thought at this time, namely of offering a theory which he could tear down in part only to build up along lines satisfactory to his general viewpoint.

In spite of differences of opinion in some matters, Herder fully recognized the importance of Sulzer in the field of aesthetics. In fact he speaks of him in one place in the *Wäldchen* as the "Hauptautor der Aesthetik."¹³ His theories had already given him high standing, but the extensive project of a "Universal Theory of Poetry and Art" which would take the form of a dictionary or encyclopedia put him far more into the lime light. In proposing to offer in the Fourth *Wäldchen* his own theories with regard to what constitutes a true theory of aesthetics, Herder realized the exact position which this put him into with regard to Sulzer. Herder was unquestionably concerned lest after all the new work might prove to be a refutation of his own theories. As a matter of fact it did not appear until

¹¹ IV, 48.

¹² IV, 144 f.

¹³ IV, 43.

after the completion of the present *Wäldchen* and then was in many respects coolly received by Herder, since at that time his studies on the *Plastik* had convinced him of the positive character of his new standpoint, which was of course unknown to Sulzer.

The Fourth *Wäldchen* commits itself to a rather extended criticism of the proposed work in so far as it hopes to offer a theory of aesthetics in the form of an encyclopedia, form and content being to Herder incompatible. The source for Sulzer's idea Herder finds in Rousseau's Dictionary of Music, in Bayle's dictionary and the *Encyclopédie*, but "why a dictionary?" Herder's objections are that a dictionary is opposed to the notion of the "inner relationship which exists between all arts." That is, instead of making clear the single fundamental principles running through all art, this method tends rather to disconnect and destroy what is implied in the term "universal theory." Herder would imply then that his own work here may come too late "to take the Penelope work out of his hands."¹⁴

While this work may be misnamed, Herder admits the great value it will have in so far that "it will furnish material for any one in the future wishing to make a true analysis." He wishes to see in it exactly what Sulzer proposed, namely, as Herder quotes from Sulzer, "an edifice of aesthetics from the standpoint of times, peoples, tastes in poetry and all the arts," and Herder adds that "if an encyclopedia is not of this kind that all the articles taken together form a complete and historical whole of art, then it is imperfect, deceptive and useless." His suggestion then is that it stand as such and no further effort be made to carry on the original project of constructing a theory which would necessitate the "cutting to pieces of the whole which he has worked out." After some additional criticism to the general idea of the dictionary form he welcomes it, for it makes it necessary for Riedel "to improve his work, or since that cannot be done without a palingenesis, to sacrifice it to the flames."

C. MENDELSSOHN

There are many reasons for the opinion that Mendelssohn stood much closer to Herder's thought than did Sulzer, even though Herder seems to accord to Sulzer the ranking position with regard to aesthetics. It has already been suggested that Mendelssohn

¹⁴ IV, 146.

rather than Sulzer is the logical successor of Baumgarten, both by insisting on the sensuous nature of beauty and by going a step further and making a distinction between beauty and perfection. There may be considerable truth then in Herder's own admission in the Fragment on Baumgarten¹⁵ that Mendelssohn had made him "more certain of the real value of Baumgarten." And it is generally true that Mendelssohn's position with regard to the sensuous part of our nature is much more acceptable to Herder than the rationalism which still characterized Sulzer.

In the discussion of Mendelssohn in the eleventh chapter of Part II, the following works are singled out: *Briefe über die Empfindungen*, *die Rhapsodie*, *die Hauptgrundsätze* and his contributions to the *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften* and the *Literaturbriefe*. Herder states that "Mendelssohn's *Briefe* (über die *Empfindungen*) establish the distinction between beauty and perfection, between dark, clear and distinct pleasures, between the contribution of the body (i.e. the senses) and the soul to our pleasant emotions, more closely than does Sulzer, and with insight and the most agreeable enthusiasm he supplements Sulzer at the very point where Sulzer takes for beauty what is not beauty. These Letters and the *Rhapsodie* which followed comprehend man in the broad totality of his mixed nature and offer with greater accuracy as far as quantity (of sensation?) is concerned, a very philosophic theory of mixed sensations (or emotions)."

This is a fairly accurate statement with regard to Herder's attitude towards Mendelssohn, which is confirmed in those portions of the *Wäldchen* which deal with the general aspects of a theory of aesthetics, and it indicates how carefully Herder had analyzed the works of these two men and had discovered the essential differences. Herder proceeds definitely from Mendelssohn's position that beauty, that the very term "aesthetics," rests on the predominantly sensuous part of our nature. What Mendelssohn had to offer from this standpoint was fully acceptable to him and throughout the *Wäldchen* he has nothing but praise for his position in this matter. It was only the failure to get beyond the consideration of the sensuous character of beauty to a more definite consideration of the objects of art in their relation to the sense of pleasure that Herder finds reason to

¹⁵ XXXII, 189.

/ criticize him. Hence he states with regard to the "Hauptgrundsätze" that while it may serve as a "general map for one wishing to survey the field, it is too lacking in the matter of data (immateriell) and too little analyzed or explained for any one to wish to travel by or to mark out the boundaries of art. To determine these boundaries and to give each art its peculiar and original conception, was not Mendelssohn's intention; he only showed or worked out a main principle which he developed deductively."¹⁶ In other words Herder's idea is that it is time to go farther and employ the experimental method with regard to art, taking into account both the object and the subjective impression.

Herder has continual praise for Mendelssohn as well as Sulzer because of the fact that they remained true to the principle that pleasure in art goes back to a single faculty of the soul. It is time that we determine Herder's position with regard to this matter. Sulzer's interpretation has already been noted.¹⁷ Mendelssohn differed from Sulzer in giving larger place to the sensuous nature. Like Sulzer he believed that the primary impulse of the soul was towards perfection. This Mendelssohn interpreted however not as ultimately a logical perfection which was never satisfied with the confused perception of the senses, but rather accepted the limitation of the senses as a fact of our finite existence and the chief means at our disposal for satisfying the soul's desire for perfection. Herder makes numerous efforts to explain Leibnitz's theory of the monad and the pleasure which comes to it through securing "ideas," but his real contribution to this matter was to take the entire question out of the realm of the purely metaphysical and consider it a question of epistemology. In other words the reasons which had induced Locke to take up a theory of knowledge were just as applicable to Herder. Just as the senses have a certain definite function with regard to our ideas in general so why not to our ideas in the realm of art was Herder's proposition. In other words the soul knows only one active principle acting on experience. Hence it happens that while Herder in general terms can take sides with Sulzer and Mendelssohn, because they in distinction from Riedel, etc. upheld a single principle of the soul, it must be said that the moment he took up the theory of the senses on the basis of Lockian philosophy to found aesthetic theory,

¹⁶ IV, 148.

¹⁷ Above, p. 99.

that moment he took a step decidedly in advance of his predecessors. That he is outdistancing Mendelssohn at this point is clear from the statement he makes with regard to Mendelssohn just before he quotes Diderot's Letter on the Blind, to the effect that he had not taken into account the fact that the sense of sight does not give us our ideas of forms and bodies. And yet it does not follow that Herder changed his views with regard to the general principle which he thought at the basis of German philosophy as can be seen from a letter written to Mendelssohn from Paris¹⁸ after completing the *Wäldchen*. "According to your elucidations¹⁹ our ideas with regard to the nature of the human soul are very similar. . . . Pardon me if I don't always speak transcendently and in the language of 'system,' and if I don't express myself accurately; try to put my thoughts in your own words; in the end we must agree. Cultivation of the soul powers leads to the development of abilities; these abilities are realities, and where proportionately cultivated become perfections." In other words Leibnitz and Shaftesbury. Then occurs this significant statement, which indicates how Herder's theory of art built on the study of the sense activity fits into this general scheme. "This seems to me first of all certain; all our cultivation, learning, *Fertigwerden*, is only a development of powers that lie in us, which are brought complete into this world, which make up the essential of the soul. As impossible as it is for us to give ourselves another sense, so little can we add powers, realities, perfections. It is only the modification of the formal part of our perceptions that we may give ourselves; the dark idea becomes clear, the clear becomes distinct, the sensuous-imperfect becomes the *sensuous-perfect*."

In the problem which Lessing took up in the Laokoon Herder stood much closer to Mendelssohn than he did to Lessing. As against Lessing's position with regard to words as the natural signs of poetry Herder could have found in Mendelssohn plenty of support for the view that words were not natural, but were arbitrary signs. Mendelssohn's theory of pleasure led naturally to a consideration of emotional content rather than beauty of form, so that Herder's position was consistent with that of Mendelssohn when he sought in the First *Wäldchen* to make clear the value of action or the "poeti-

¹⁸ Dec. 1, 1769.

¹⁹ Mendelssohn's letter to Herder is lost.

cal" element not merely in poetry but in all the arts. The Fourth Wäldchen approached the subject from a totally different standpoint so that except for Herder's own statements with regard to his attitude towards Mendelssohn's theories there is no way of knowing how closely Herder accepted Mendelssohn's theory of emotions. In fact the interpretation which he puts on sculpture shows a reaction in favor of Winckelmann in so far as he is able to see the value now of a single figure in sculpture.

Mendelssohn's importance to Herder's aesthetic theories lies in the fact that he made perfectly clear to Herder the rôle of the senses with respect to art. "Have men naturally a leaning towards the perception of what is beautiful? In the widest sense, yes, because they are all capable of sensuous ideas. We are at the same time animal spirits; our sensuous powers, if I may say so, seem to occupy a larger space in our soul than the few 'upper' powers; they develop earlier, they are more effective; they belong more in the visible part of our existence than the others; since we do not come to full fruition here, they are the flower of our perfection. The whole background of our soul is made up of these 'dark' ideas, . . . they become the motive forces of our life, they are the greatest contribution to our happiness and unhappiness."²⁰ This was all made clear in Mendelssohn. But Mendelssohn did not go farther with the consideration of the senses than to note the distinction between sight and hearing, ideas which were to be found in the distinction of painting and music in the Laokoon but which did not require an analysis of these senses. Herder's theory in the Wäldchen has this general theory only in the background, his own position being not in contradiction to, but in advance of what he found thus far. The explanation of art by a sixth sense, Herder dismisses²¹ for the same reasons which Mendelssohn once suggested, namely that it cuts off at once any further philosophy on the subject.

d. WINCKELMANN

Winckelmann's idealistic attitude towards Greek sculpture occupies a definite place in Herder's theory, although perhaps differently interpreted. In the First Wäldchen Herder had in general championed Winckelmann where he was opposed by Lessing. While

²⁰ IV, 28.

²¹ IV.

accepting the position, as did both Lessing and Winckelmann, that beauty of form was an essential law of sculpture, he refused to go to the length Lessing did and fail to accord positive rights to emotional content. He therefore openly emphasizes "expression" in which Lessing saw the source for the vagaries of modern art.

That Herder had a clear conception of the character of Winckelmann's idealism is seen in the following passage from the 1st *Wäldchen*.²² "Like to that Greek artist to whom beauty itself (but of course beauty of art) had appeared, enchanted he sought its form painted with fire in his mind, burning in his eye, stirring in his heart;—this figure of beauty, the image of love, he sought everywhere, even in reflected splendor; he fancied he saw it, as Kleist's Amynte did his beloved Lalage, even in footprints, in the reflection of the water, the breath of the zephyr, which to be sure might come from another Lalage—the beauty of the poet. So in the feeling of this graphic rather than poetic beauty, he stood before Virgil's Laokoon, as before the Laokoon of Polydorus (Agesander) and in this manner he must be read, for this is the limitation of human nature, that we may see only one thing at one time.—This one thing in Winckelmann was art."

Again within the First *Wäldchen* Herder comes back to the position of Winckelmann with regard to ideal beauty as against the idea of Mendelssohn. By the fact that plastic art is a "work" and may therefore present only a single moment, the work must be of such a nature that the "soul may forget itself in viewing it, may have a sense of repose and lose the measure of time." "In bodies this eternal moment is perfect beauty; and in so far as the soul may work through bodies, it is Greek repose (*Ruhe*). This lies between a dead inactivity and a wrought up exaggerated effect; the imagination can soar to either side, and finds the most prolonged enjoyment in this moment. Dead inactivity cuts off the thread of thought with a single stroke; the figure is dead, who will awaken it? On the other side the exaggeration of expression cuts off the flight of fancy; who can conceive anything higher than the highest? But the blessed repose of Greek expression rocks the soul to both sides, and in this sight we imagine the quiet sea (a frequent figure in Winckelmann) from which the gentle wave of motion and passion rises. What if the

²² III, 10.

wave should become higher? What if from this gentle zephyr there should arise a destructive storm of passion? How the waves would tower and expression swell up? What a broad field for thought lies in the gentle repose of Greek expression." This is clearly an attempt to express the Winckelmann point of view, but with the obvious distinction that Herder stresses much more the latent passion, than the Greek conception of moderation and strength of character as Winckelmann saw it.

The First Wäldchen clearly showed that in his demand for a larger expression of emotion, Herder had favored group sculpture to the single-figure. The interesting fact is that the Fourth Wäldchen offers a theory which looks upon the single figure as the true field of sculpture and permits a more accurate acceptance of Winckelmann's view. He states with regard to "beautiful form" (in which idea he here associates the name of Webb with that of Winckelmann): "This is the explanation for the greater enthusiasm of the lovers of sculpture than those of painting. When the connoisseur of painting describes his painting, he has surfaces before him; he depicts the figures in their situation, their presence; he describes what he sees before him. But let the lover of Apollo Belvedere and the torso and Niobe describe what is before him. He does not have surfaces, it is for him to describe the body which he feels, or rather not describe but make it felt. Then his touch-imagination steps into the place of the colder and analytical eye; then he feels Hercules in his whole body and this body in all its deeds. In the mighty outlines of his body he feels the strength of the conqueror of giants, in the gentle outlines the agile combatant of Achelous; he feels the great and splendid breast which crushed Geryon. The touch-imagination has here no measure or limitations."²³ The wise simplicity of the ancients, and the blessed repose, and the exact contour and the clinging drapery which the Greeks give their statues, is explained obviously from this sense of touch which feels as if it were in the dark in order not to be distracted by sight and gives itself over to the outpourings of imagination. Here there can be nothing ugly, nothing distorted and drawn in the main expression . . . for only in the actual perfection which a line this way or that shows, lies the sensual pleasure of art."²⁴ In these passages we are

²³ IV, 66 f.

²⁴ IV, 72. See also IV, 157.

able to see how Herder's theory of sculpture, built up on Hogarth's theory of the line, which Winckelmann also accepted, is brought into harmony with Winckelmann's ideal conception of sculpture.²⁵

In a paragraph devoted in part to a discussion of Winckelmann Herder has this to say: "If, as Winckelmann says, beauty has not since Plato's time been written about with feeling (*Empfindung*) then Winckelmann's own works have been composed not after a fleeting survey, but in living touch (*Handgefühl*) with sculptural beauty. His first work on Imitation was formed with the richest unction and in the awakening glow of sensation (*Empfindung*). This work and his "*Empfindung des Schönen selbst*" and the essential part of his history of art, are a mine full of veins of gold for the treasure of aesthetics. If he speaks in too general terms, one need only limit his judgment to his particular art and point of view, which was pre-eminently that of sculpture."²⁶

c. SHAFTESBURY

Herder accepted Shaftesbury's standpoint relative to the good, the beautiful and the true as it was understood in Germany. The passage quoted on page 94 relative to architecture indicates clearly this position and is an additional evidence of the extent to which Shaftesbury's views were in accord with the classical conception of art which obtained in Germany throughout the 18th Century.

f. HOME

Herder's references to Home are of such a nature that one may conclude that Herder shared the opinion of the time with regard to the importance of Home in the field of aesthetics. What individual ideas he accepted from Home, if any, it is difficult to determine. His discussion of sight indicates a familiarity with Home's view, a fact that is confirmed by his note on page 46, although a similar discussion is found elsewhere, in Sulzer for example. He seems at one point to dismiss Home with the statement that "many of the observations made by Home he had known a long time and in a more exact language in Baumgarten,"²⁷ a statement which would need qualifica-

²⁵ See above.

²⁶ IV, 89.

²⁷ IV, 16.

tion. Home's possible contribution to Herder's thought must in the end be looked for rather in the general method and in his understanding of the term aesthetics than in individual theories, and in view of Herder's original purpose of giving a general theory and method of aesthetics, this is very important.

Herder could find his way clear as a rule to praise Home for his general manner in approaching the subject of aesthetics. "Home analyzed works of art, viz., Shakespeare and Ossian; and he drew deductions from ideas thus secured just as did Baumgarten,"²⁸ and it is just this "strict analysis" which Herder so highly praised. Likewise in showing that aesthetics was a science and not the pleasure in art itself, he may well have had Home for a model, his reasoning being identical except that Home attempts to show the moral value of such exercise. But while Herder finds reasons in general for praising Home, he offers fairly accurate criticism from his standpoint in the critique in Part II, Chapter 11. In the first place he finds that his discussion of novelty, beauty, sublime, etc., are treated without being brought into any vital relation with a fundamental idea or system; in other words these main ideas seem to him to be detached. His book may be used only as a compilation of principles or observations, but certainly not as a theory of art. In the second place he has taken into account human nature and poetry, but has omitted the fine arts, so that the criticism which may be applied to Baumgarten or Meier is applicable to him, namely a lack of complete data, and this he considers unfortunate since poetry in his estimation has the arts for its very foundation. Home has, he thinks, confined his attention more to the emotional side of human nature than to beauty in objects, and as far as it goes is the most valuable contribution to the subjective side of aesthetics. Finally he concludes that after all Home does not proceed experimentally, inductively, but begins with passions and emotions and then seeks for examples to support them, and Herder finds great offense in detaching excerpts from the body of a work of poetic art whereby the original spirit must be missing. But whether the examples are effective or not Herder sees no reason for taking exception to his conclusions on the passions.

We are led to conclude that there is little indication that Herder was thoroughly familiar with Home's work further than to grasp his

²⁸ IV, 21.

general position and manner. As a matter of fact Herder stood much farther from Home than these general criticisms would indicate.

g. BURKE

Burke, on the other hand, stood much closer to Herder than Home. He had read Burke²⁹ just before taking up his *Wäldchen* and had immediately seen the relation in which his essay stood to such theory as proposed by Riedel. He must however have been prepared for Burke's viewpoint through Mendelssohn, who, we have shown, was indebted to him for important views on art, particularly with regard to the distinctions of beauty and truth, and with regard to the passions in both of which Herder concurred. There is however a distinct portion of the *Wäldchen* which is clearly a Burke product, namely the theory of music. And Herder leaves us little doubt, had the argument itself been not convincing, by acknowledging the fact. "We have a British empirical philosopher, who has followed these two feelings (beauty and sublimity) deep into our nature and at the same time into the very fibres which immediately surround the soul, and has everywhere reduced the sublime to a feeling of tension and beauty to a feeling of relaxation of the nerves—it is Burke, the author of the philosophic Inquiry of Beauty and the Sublime, whom Mendelssohn made known to us and whom Lessing has promised us so long. He may have the pairing of his two feelings with the impulses of selfish and social affections: he may have his *qualitates occultas* of ideas which no longer can be justified in an intellectual point of view: he may have all that is system (hypothetical theory); the real observations in Burke are genuine discoveries."³⁰ He continues the discussion of Burke at some length, expressing regret that he had not carried the investigation farther with respect to the relation of the nerves to these finer feelings, and more particularly because he did not get beyond general emotions to an examination of the relations of the various arts to our sensitive nature. In other words Herder leads one to believe that this will be his own field, to continue Burke where he left off, taking into account his own distinction of the arts on the basis of the senses.

²⁹ See below, p. 122.

³⁰ IV, 104 ff. Cf. IV, 173 ff.

h. HOGARTH

Hogarth's theory of the line had been accepted generally in Germany. It is hardly necessary to repeat here the essential position which this theory held in Herder's theory of touch with respect to sculpture. It is such an important factor that one wonders whether Herder would have found his way clear to advance this theory except with the aid of this principle. For what he does at this point is to take over the serpentine or elliptical line and make the immediate impression of beauty in sculpture to rest on the effect this has on touch. As to the use of this principle by analogy, with respect to the theory of sound he had Sulzer for example as a model.

i. ROUSSEAU

The immediate effect of Rousseau on Herder's thought is not indicated in the Fourth Wäldchen, further than that he cites Rousseau in considering the effect which would result were education to proceed from the principle that many of our ideas originate with touch, a theory which he developed in *Emile*.^{30a} We know from the correspondence that Herder at this time thinks he is no longer a follower of Rousseau, but this had reference no doubt to certain theories. Generally speaking one cannot lose sight of the fact that Herder owes much to both Rousseau and Hamann for the attitude toward what may be called feeling, as opposed to a rational point of view, and yet from the standpoint of specific theory Rousseau seemed to have contributed little, although one may not under-estimate the value of this contribution which may have emboldened Herder to suggest an aesthetic education which would proceed not from the reason, but the senses.^{30b}

j. DIDEROT

The study of the relation of Diderot to Herder's thought has often been suggested, but so far has not been worked out in detail. Haym, for example,³¹ speaks of a general kinship between the two men, but confines himself to generalities in this connection. Rosenkranz³² states: "I marvel that instead of the parallel between Diderot and Lessing which has become monotonous, one does not compare

^{30a} IV, 52.

^{30b} IV, 167 ff.

³¹ I, 348.

³² Diderot II, 398.

the former with Herder, with whom he offers many points of contact by reason of his many sided receptivity, his declamatory pathos and his enthusiasm for everything that is concerned with humanity," all of which is in general terms. Siegel³³ likewise points this out. In view of this very general feeling that such an investigation should be undertaken, it may be that the present work may perform some service in pointing out what seems to be a very definite point of relationship between these two men.

References to Diderot occur in the earlier works of Herder. They had to do in the main with Diderot's theory of pantomime both as regards the origin of language, inversions, etc., and in regard to stage representation, thus showing a familiarity with both the *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* and the essays on the drama. He was acquainted further with Diderot's general position with regard to the relation of what we know as *milieu* to taste and poetic expression. Herder's essay on the Ode follows very closely a development of thought found in Diderot. There is little question of the high respect with which Herder held the French encyclopedist during these years, so that he had no prejudice of mind to overcome in order to accept the suggestion for those ideas which come to light for the first time in the Fourth Wäldchen and which from then on to the end of his life form an integral part of his thought.

The first of the important references to Diderot in the Fourth Wäldchen is an extended translation taken from the "Essai sur la Poésie Dramatique."³⁴ His purpose in using the passage was to indicate a kind of *milieu* which would lead to a variation of taste, whereas Diderot had intended to illustrate what he considered to be a type of *moeurs* which was naturally poetic. The use, however, which Herder made of the reference was in no way contrary to Diderot's point of view, which was held rather generally throughout the 18th Century, for example in Dubos, Shaftesbury, etc.

In another place³⁵ Herder takes up the discussion of Diderot's article "Beau." This had been written by Diderot for the *Encyclopédie* and was circulated in advance along with a copy of the *Discours Préliminaire* to advertise the coming work. Here he states that

³³ Herder als Philosoph., p. 34.

³⁴ IV, 39, Diderot VII, 370.

³⁵ IV, 149.

Diderot's philosophical thoughts on the "formation of the conception of beauty in us, the point of view which different languages have toward this conception, and its variations, everywhere betray the keen philosopher, which makes him so distinct in his nation. The entire article would be worthy of translation and interpretation, especially with reference to the position of Crousaz, André and Hutcheson towards beauty." While at work on the Fourth *Wäldchen* Herder had referred to this same article in a letter to Hamann.³⁶ "I have read Diderot's article "Beau" and except for some of my favorite theories as to how beauty develops in us (probably in reference to the fact that our taste for beauty is in reality an acquired readiness of judgment) and a good critique of what has been written on beauty before this time, I found nothing that may be called new theory." Reference is further made within the *Wäldchen* to Diderot's theory of dramatic picture or *tableau* with respect to stage representation as well as his theory of dramatic expression.³⁷ In another passage he mentions his theory of music along with that of Euler, D'Alembert, etc.

But the real importance of Diderot to the development of thought in the *Wäldchen* is seen in the extensive references to the Letter on the Blind, as may be seen from the following. "The sense of sight is the most artificial and the most philosophical of the senses; it is attained, as those who have been blind tell us, only with the greatest effort and practice."³⁸ A theory of sight "would teach us to *see* beauty . . . and not to speak as the blind do of color and the mirror."³⁹ "The blind tell us that many unknown nuances are distinguishable to the hearing which now only belong to sight."⁴⁰ To show us that touch is the sense which gives us impressions of bodies, and incidentally to make clear that his theory is in advance of that of Mendelssohn for this reason, he cites Diderot's "Letter on the Blind" and gives as complete an outline as possible without including Diderot's metaphysical deductions and the conclusions which had no direct bearing on Herder's purpose.⁴¹ Part II, chapter 3, taken up

³⁶ Middle March 1769.

³⁷ IV, 18.

³⁸ IV, 45.

³⁹ IV, 47.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ IV, 49 ff.

with a development of the theory that touch is the sense appealed to in sculpture, is of course at the very heart of his theory and while no immediate reference may be found to Diderot on the blind, the source for this general position is clear. In the discussion of painting which follows he states "The blind one who regained his sight saw all the objects like a large colored picture surface lying immediately upon his eye."⁴² The entire theory of the colossal in art is based on the experience of the blind who immediately after sight was restored saw everything as a "gigantic form in the eye" and he mentions the case of Chesselden "who did not through sight find that in the faces of his friends which he had formerly found through touch."⁴³ In the theory of music, he states that "the blind have much deeper feeling for the first moments of agreeable tone than those who see, whose inner sense of tone feeling is diverted by a thousand external distracting surface images."⁴⁴ And finally the reference to Riedel as the "man who has a conception of each art about which he writes comparable to the blind man's conception of color."⁴⁵

Diderot's Letter on the Blind which was the apparent source for the idea which Herder is seen to apply thus zealously was not written with a view to furnishing a basis for aesthetic theory. It had been written in part to take up the discussion of the problem which had originally been raised by Molineux in a letter to Locke as to whether a man whose sight was restored would be able to distinguish a cube from a sphere. This problem was discussed among others by Berkeley and by Robert Smith, whose "Complete System of Opticks" was well known in his day, both of whom take up the case of a blind lad whose sight was restored by Dr. Chesselden and reported in the Philosophical Transactions, as a support for their particular viewpoints. The discussion was taken up in France by Voltaire, Condillac, Buffon and Diderot and also reported in the article "Aveugle" in the Encyclopédie, in every instance the case of Chesselden being used as a basis for argument. Diderot's Letter attaches itself normally to this discussion, but to the case of Chesselden he adds other cases of men born blind. In addition to taking up the question of

⁴² IV, 74.

⁴³ IV, 82, also 85.

⁴⁴ IV, 106.

⁴⁵ IV, 128.

the sphere and the cube Diderot interested himself in certain metaphysical considerations with respect to the existence of God, the atheistical tendency of which was in part responsible for his imprisonment.

The history of this discussion is interesting from the fact that of all the writers mentioned who have taken up the question of the blind, Diderot was the only one to hint at the possibilities of its application to aesthetics, which he however does only casually. He raises the question for example as to whether a blind man will have an idea of beauty and what his ideas of symmetry and order really are. He states further that touch gives the idea of relief⁴⁶ and that the blind have no sense of painting.⁴⁷ It is in fact Herder who takes the final step in this story of making this case of the blind the real basis for an aesthetic theory.

During the period covered by the composition of the Fourth Wäldchen there is no indication in the correspondence nor in the "Journal" of the value of Diderot's Letter to Herder. Except for the reading of the article Beau⁴⁸ and two references to the fact that he had found in Nantes Diderot's Éloge de Richardson,⁴⁹ for which he two years before expressed enthusiasm particularly for the style,⁵⁰ the only indication we have that Herder may have come into contact with the writings of Diderot are in connection with the reading of the Encyclopédie.

In contrast to the Nantes period the portions of the Journal written in Paris as well as the correspondence from there have much to say with respect to Diderot. In the Journal he wonders whether Diderot has "outlived himself."⁵¹ He writes Nicolai (Nov. 30) that Diderot is "the best philosopher in France and regrets only that he "knows too little of German philosophy"; he speaks also of a treatise "on the imitation of different nations in the different fine arts" which Diderot is preparing and promises to write more of him and of French literature another time. In the Journal,

⁴⁶ I, 282. Diderot (Assezat Ed.)

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁴⁸ See above.

⁴⁹ To Hartknoch, Aug. 4; to Hamann Lb. II, 2.3, p. 62.

⁵⁰ IV, 225.

⁵¹ IV, 435.

written in Paris,⁵² we find this highly pertinent statement: "I have worked out something with regard to aesthetics and believe it to be really new; but in how little? In the proposition that sight sees only surfaces, touch feels only forms; this was already known to us through optics.⁵³ Only the application remains therefore that painting is for the eye and sculpture for the touch, a discovery which is still slight and if expanded too much will lead to absurd consequences. Therefore let this proposition be a guide for more experiments with regard to sight and touch. I must become a blind man in order to examine the philosophy of this sense! I believe I am on some new paths, let me see!" There follow some outlines bearing these headings: "Illusion der Statue vom Fleische," "Vom Schönen durchs Gefühl," "Von der Philosophie des Gefühls überhaupt," "Illusion der Statue vom Geiste." He continues: "This is a plan which had been previously made, which however needs to be enlivened through an association with and a study of the blind and the deaf and dumb. *Diderot can be my model* in making experiments, but not merely to build on his experiments and theorize (systematisiren) on them."⁵⁴

The earliest studies for the *Plastik*, in which Herder embodies his new theories, date back to this time. The first of these as well as the later ones are introduced by an outline of Diderot's Letter on the Blind and even more than in the Fourth Wäldchen the case of the blind man is used to make clear the particular point in mind. But in Paris Herder's enthusiasm extended beyond this one idea and included other theories indicating a familiarity with Diderot's Letter on the Deaf and Dumb and the Dramatic essays. In the Journal under date of Dec. 2⁵⁵ Herder writes: "I have heard whole pieces and not found a single inarticulate cry of nature and passion which could be called natural, have seen pieces with no movement, not a step which could have moved a person who was deaf." This was with reference to Diderot's theory of pantomime. Diderot reports that he often went to the theatre and stopped his ears that he might the better judge of the action of a piece and the expression of the emotion through gestures etc. Herder speaks further of simplicity as

⁵² IV, 443 f.

⁵³ See reference to Smith above, p. 115.

⁵⁴ IV, 443 ff.

⁵⁵ IV, 481.

the real expression of passion and states that the stage could be the best school of morals by the production of *honnête* comedies. "Oh, could I contribute to this end. I will at least strengthen Diderot's voice."⁵⁶ With respect to opera: "A deaf man who could see and a blind man who could hear, which would get more from the opera? The former among the French and the latter among the Italians." He then proposes an opera where the story can be followed by the eye without the necessity of hearing.⁵⁷

Diderot's contribution to Herder's thought in view of these statements is unquestionable. It would be interesting to determine at just what time the possibility of applying a theory of the blind to aesthetic theory had occurred to him since with this theory Herder is able to advance along peculiarly positive lines. As has been stated in no writing previous to the Paris period do we find any mention of this theory except within the Fourth Wäldchen and the question may here be asked whether or not this theory was itself a part of the original draft of the Wäldchen made in Riga or was an essential part of the "revision" which took place in Nantes. A brief discussion of this point will form the concluding section of this study.

⁵⁶ IV, 483.

⁵⁷ IV, 484.

COMPOSITION OF THE FOURTH WÄLDCHEN
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
INFLUENCE OF DIDEROT

From what has been stated in the preceding section with regard to Diderot, it is clear that the new theory of the relation of the sense of touch to sculpture had become an all engrossing subject with Herder so far as the field of aesthetics was concerned. It has been seen that in the development of this theory Diderot's study of the blind played an exceedingly important part since Herder not only never fails to include an analysis of the Letter on the Blind in every draft of the Plastik, but the argument from the blind forms an integral part of the discussion not only here but in all of his future aesthetic works, this being notably the case in the Kalligone wherein Herder attempts to combat the position of Kant. Since the first use which was made of the Letter on the Blind occurs in certain sections of the Fourth Wäldchen and since the first evidences of enthusiasm for this phase of Diderot's thought appear during the French Visit, and especially during his stay in Paris, one is drawn to the conclusion that this particular turn in Herder's interest not only represents a late development within the work, but was probably coincident with his French visit.

When Herder undertook to write the fourth of the Critical Wäldchen he had a full program before him in combating Riedel's theory or aesthetics and in setting up a *general* theory of his own. In this connection then it is of no little significance that Herder's publisher Hartknoch, after having had access to the Riga Manuscript before Herder took it with him to France, should fail to see in it anything further than an "attack on Riedel" together with "much thorough investigation."¹ It may be further noted that Hartknoch made no mention at all of the Wäldchen in the first letter he wrote Herder after his departure, so that there seems to be good grounds to believe that the "new theory" did not form a part of the Riga Manuscript, since no reader of the Wäldchen in its present form would fail to point out Herder's new and positive contribution, the originality of which Herder is not lax in emphasizing.

¹ See below, p. 124.

The correspondence indicates that Herder's first interest after his arrival in Nantes was the perusal of the *Encyclopédie*, which might well have furnished the occasion for familiarizing himself with Diderot's position, since the article *Aveugle* contained a good synopsis of the *Letter*, although one may not suppose Herder to have been unacquainted with the existence of this work of Diderot. It is on the other hand worthy of note that in a reference to Diderot in the correspondence of the Riga period during the composition of the *Wäldchen*, wherein Herder mentions that he had been reading the article "Beau" of Diderot, and had found nothing there which was new to him, he makes no mention at all of the article on the Blind which later figured so vitally in his work.

We have no information concerning the extent of revision which Herder undertook in his *Wäldchen* after his arrival in France further than that contained in a letter written to his publisher in October. "I am just on the point of leaving Nantes, and Heaven knows I have so much to do that I don't know how I shall get through. I have worked over the Fourth *Wäldchen* and still have one part to change before sending it off." And later in the same letter he states that he is going "to besiege" him with books, and first of all is the Fourth *Wäldchen*. "It is quite different from the preceding ones; the style is much more dignified and has very interesting passages, which however must be searched for."

In this connection it is illuminating to consider the effect of the departure from Riga on Herder's general state of mind as he seems to recognize it himself. To Hartknoch (Aug. 4) he writes that he will discontinue the controversy with Klotz "because of a more dignified bearing which he owes himself and the public." He promises for the future to get beyond the "elende kurze Zeitverbindungen" and to write only such things as will "add to the sum of human thought." In a letter to Nicolai (Aug. 5) he makes it clear that the quarrels with the Klotzian school had gotten on his nerves and for this and other reasons he found that his own future development rested on his breaking away from Riga,² and later in the same letter he wishes that Lessing would no longer have anything to do with this "nest of hornets." On the eve of leaving Nantes for Paris, he writes to Hartknoch (Oct. 1769) "Picture to yourself the first rest after long public

² See also to Hamann End of August.

activities, the first feeling of giving oneself over to the Muses without having the hours call to duty, the first sensation of not having to lie in wait anxiously for the next Klotzian papers, or of fermenting Critical Wäldchen and studying literature as literature. Feeling demands rest and progress and I should have been unworthy of any further attempt with the Muses if I had not had such a splendid pause between work and travel, between mouldering monotony and too sudden dissipation, between sea and land, between Riga and Paris. And I may say, now that I am closing up everything, that I am not leaving Nantes as I came here, even in respect to many phases of my thought." "Many ideas and prejudices with regard to my writings have changed." Whether or not these reference have directly to do with the Fourth Wäldchen, they emphasize a fact, which of course is well known, that the period in Nantes was in the real sense of the word a period of transition. It is clear that controversial writing had become distasteful to him, and that he was impatient to apply himself to original work. From this standpoint the Wäldchen under discussion finds its place in so far as it reveals what is in part critical and polemic, and what on the other hand is distinctly new theory and to which his future writing in this field naturally attaches itself.

The earliest references to the Wäldchen leave no doubt with regard to its original purpose, namely to combat the theory of Riedel. Such a purpose was consistent with the general character of the critical "Wäldchen" which with the second and third Wäldchen had taken on a distinctly polemic character. In fact all of Herder's preceding work had been essentially critical, no independently constructive work having appeared up to this time from his pen. The desire to combat Riedel in particular had its immediate source in the controversy with the Klotz school which had been brought to a head, as far as Herder himself was concerned, by Riedel's participation in securing a copy of the revised third volume of the *Fragmente* before it was ready for the public, his purpose being to publish an early critique of the work. Herder was deeply incensed and his entire correspondence at this time indicates to what extent he was willing to play the partisan in lining up the forces of Lessing, Sulzer, Mendelssohn etc., against the entire Riedel-Klotz school. Out of this "quarrel" grew the Fourth Wäldchen.

Since Riedel's work offered what he called a theory of aesthetics, and at the same time represented an eclectic assemblage of ideas

gleaned from many writers on aesthetics in France, England and Germany, Herder found it necessary first to show that the fundamental position of the Riedel School, which accepted the general viewpoint of Hutcheson with regard to three fundamental faculties of the soul was not in accord with the main position of Wolfian philosophy; in the second place to reinterpret these same writers whom Riedel had quoted, and in the third place to establish a general theory of his own. The correspondence makes this in the main clear. At the moment he is turning his attention to the composition of this work he writes to Hamann (Nov. 1769) that Burke's work on the Sublime "overthrows the Darje-Riedel-Hutcheson philosophy," which calls to mind that in the older manuscript of page 1, of the *Wäldchen* in attacking Riedel's position there is this similar statement: "One sees the so-called fundamental faculties of the Crusius-Darje-Hutcheson philosophy."³ In a letter to Nicolai (Jan. 10) he looked upon Sulzer's work from exactly this angle. After mentioning the reading of Sulzer's essays he proceeds, "I am thinking of giving my views on Riedel's Theory, I wanted to say Rhapsody, and even undigested Rhapsody of poetry and art, and pfui! this compositor doesn't know any Sulzer, nor his theory of Sensation, etc. But between us, I am hoping to be able to give a coherent treatment of my views on aesthetics and in so doing to fill in part of my *Fragmente* which is lacking."⁴ A reference to Sulzer's work three months later indicates that Herder's main concern continues to be the overthrow of Riedel's position, "The Theory of Riedel will be completely blotted out and extinguished by this work."⁵

Suphan has gathered together the data concerning the composition of the Fourth *Wäldchen* in the Introduction to Volume III of his Edition of Herder, and the conclusions there arrived at are in the main acceptable to Haym. Mention is there made of scattered pages of several manuscripts, but it is to be regretted that a more thorough examination of these manuscripts was not presented, and particularly from the standpoint of content. So thoroughly are we convinced by every evidence at hand that the "revisions" which took place after the departure from Riga were partly of a positive nature that we

³ IV, 5 note.

⁴ See Haym I, 248.

⁵ To Nicolai, March 1769.

believe these "scattered pages" if they lend themselves to examination will confirm the general conclusions here reached. It is of course difficult to conjecture how far Herder had developed in his own mind the "general theory of aesthetics." There is to be sure a reasonable possibility that he was in fact prepared earlier to announce a theory which would take into account the senses, working in the suggestion of Sulzer or Mendelssohn, and following the analogy of Burke. There is a basis for this supposition in several passages in the *Wäldchen* where "feeling" is used in a sort of general sense, and we might conclude therefore that not until Diderot had furnished definite viewpoints did Herder see the matter with the precision which characterized his later thought, and which allowed him to set forth boldly a theory of *touch*.

There is nothing in the discussion of Suphan which militates against any of the conclusions stated above. While we may agree with Suphan that a portion of the original manuscript ending with the statement "Eben lese ich, dass Sulzers Wörterbuch zum Druck fertig liege" was probably written by March 1768, from the fact that the correspondence of March contains a similar error of statement with regard to Sulzer's work which was corrected later to read "erscheinen werde,"⁶ one does not find it necessary to accept the inference that the two-thirds of the original work completed at that time corresponds with two-thirds of the *Wäldchen* in its present form. An examination of the Fourth *Wäldchen* for example, makes it clear that Part I of the *Wäldchen* may well have represented older material, since there is no indication of the new position and only once a hint of the possibility of a division of the arts according to the senses involved, this however, being confined to the senses of sight and hearing. But in Part II, the first section and sections 3 to 9 proceed so clearly in the manner of the later *Plastik*, and with scarcely a reference to Riedel and his own general theory, that one is inclined to attribute this to a later workmanship, and this possibility Suphan does not in any way take into account.

With regard to the completion of the Riga manuscript Suphan leaves a similar inference, namely that the present form of the work was not essentially different from its original form. The letter,

⁶ IV, 168.

however, from which this conclusion is drawn states surprisingly little. Hartknoch writes Herder after his departure, as follows: "And now the last volume of the critical *Wäldchen* against Riedel. In the Preface to the Third *Wäldchen* you have called this Theory the most wretched of books, so now out with the whole story. I think the *Wäldchen* should crown the entire work; there is much thorough investigation in it." To conclude from this that the work was practically completed before Herder left Riga is a rather bold procedure and in any case does not solve the question of the extent of later "revision."

In a note to Chapter 3 of Part II of the Fourth *Wäldchen* Suphan draws a final conclusion that the discussion of sculpture as the art of touch was in fact a part of the Riga manuscript. There is no convincing argument against this supposition, but when he substantiates this by noting Diderot's familiarity with Diderot's Letter on the Deaf and Dumb, which we know of course he made use of in the *Fragmente*, he fails to see the vital relation which the Letter on the Blind bears to this Fourth *Wäldchen*, and we have little doubt Herder's enthusiasm for this new study was not only intimately connected with Diderot's letter on the Blind, but closely connected with his French journey, which is our point of contention.

While nothing here stated with regard to the composition of the *Wäldchen* affects any of the preceding study, we believe that the problem of the composition of this *Wäldchen* has more than passing interest so far as it concerns the history of Herder's development of thought. This might not be so true were it not that the composition of the *Wäldchen* bridges a period of such marked transition in Herder's thought. For this reason if for no other we hold that a more thorough analysis of the manuscripts of this work are due to the public than Suphan has ventured to offer.

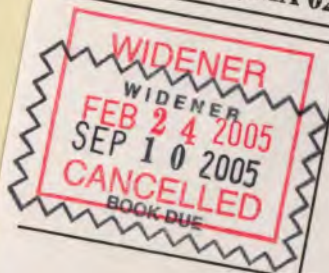
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